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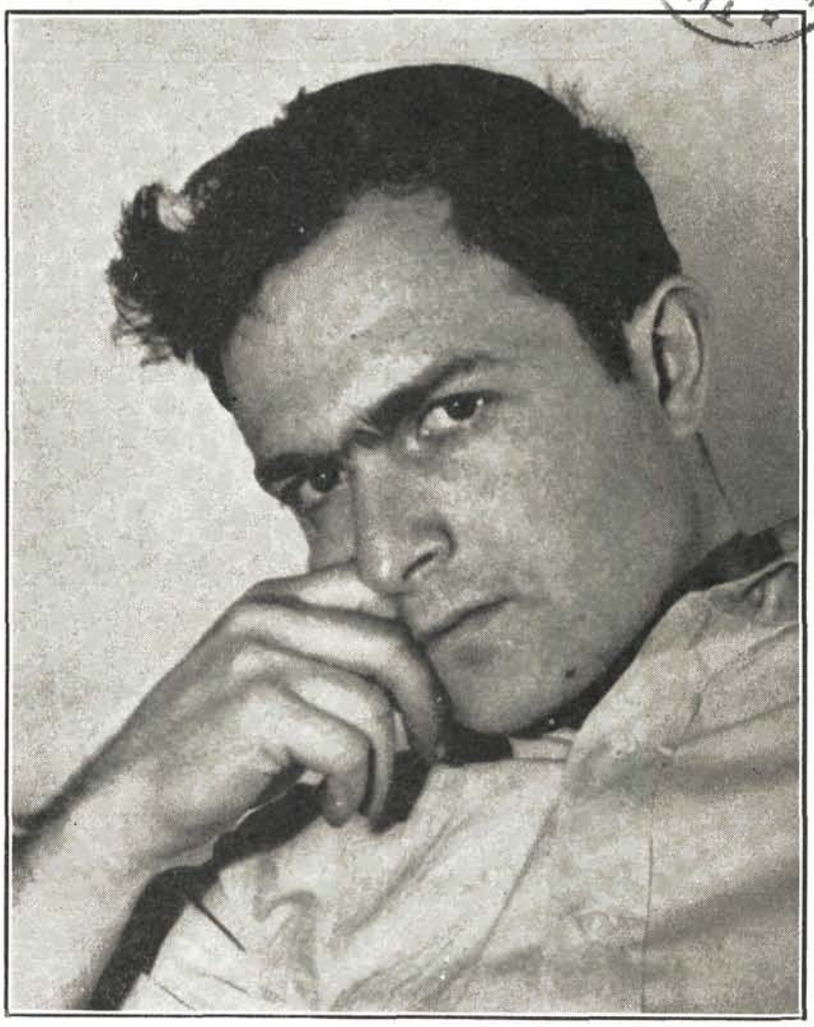

Samuel Woolf

MEYER LEVIN

"He touches upon the sources and the methods of several generations of novelists, amongst them, Dreiser, Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis, Abraham Cahan, Dos Passos, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. He intelligently organizes material and detail from the fields of domestic relationships, art, science, medicine, university life, capital and labor, real estate and finance". . . *(See page 5)*

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The Pulitzer Prize in History

BY BERNARD DEVOTO

EVERY year when the Pulitzer Prizes in Letters are announced a rash of disapproval and even derision breaks out in the press. It seldom represents a grievance so immediate and poignant as that of the publisher who, last year, had a print order for thirty thousand copies of a novel drawn up and thirty thousand jackets actually printed when the award was announced, only to learn that another publisher was going to cash in. But the generality of critics and editors are usually displeased by the awards, and the dramatic critics have been so pained that they have set up a prize of their own which, they assure us, is awarded in a loftier and more seemly manner.

There is, of course, no reason why a prize jury should please editors, critics, or the public. And in all efforts to award prizes for excellence in literature there are inescapable elements of both the absurd and the impossible. There is no such thing as a "best" book in any field, and no matter how carefully the conditions are stated the award of a prize must always involve compromise and arbitrary judgment. Objections to a particular award are usually objections to the conditions that govern it or to the critical assumptions of the judges who made it. In the arts there can be no fixed criteria: the most that can reasonably be asked of a jury is that they shall have an intelligent idea of what constitutes excellence in their particular field, and shall choose a book which is not clearly inferior to others in that field. Since there can hardly be an inevitable choice, it will be enough to make an intelligent choice.

In poetry, fiction, drama, and even biography subjective values ultimately determine such a choice. The objections made to Pulitzer Prizes in those fields not only fail, in general, to take that fact into account, but are themselves necessarily subjective also. When a literary critic objects to a Pulitzer Prize in fiction or poetry, he can say little more than that he doesn't think the prizewinner is as good as some other book, and one can say little in answer or comment except that one agrees or disagrees with him. But there is one field in which the subjective factors, though powerful, are susceptible to some control—history. The material of history is fairly objective and it is not complicated by the variables which esthetic considerations introduce. The canons of judgment are clearer and more capable of being stated, and it ought to be easier for jurors of diverse points of view to reach an agreement. It ought to be possible, therefore, to submit the Pulitzer Prizes in history to critical appraisal and to determine how intelligently they have been awarded. What makes them satisfactory or unsatisfactory? Have they been awarded in accordance with a clear, liberal, and consistently intelligent understanding of what history is? How far do they seem arbitrary or uninformed? Are they clearly open to any general or specific objection?

Some months ago I set out to study them with such questions in mind. To cover all the awards since 1917 would involve too much detail and I have therefore confined myself to the last ten years. The prize is awarded for "the best book of the year upon the history of the United States," and has been awarded to the following books. (Here and hereafter the dates listed are those of publication, although the prizes are awarded in the following year and are usually so identified.)

1926: S. F. Bemis, "Pinckney's Treaty."

1927: V. L. Parrington, "Main Currents in American Thought."

1928: F. A. Shannon, "The Organization and Administration of the Union Army."

1929: C. H. Van Tyne, "The War of Independence."

1930: B. E. Schmitt, "The Coming of the War, 1914."

1931: John J. Pershing, "My Experiences in the World War."

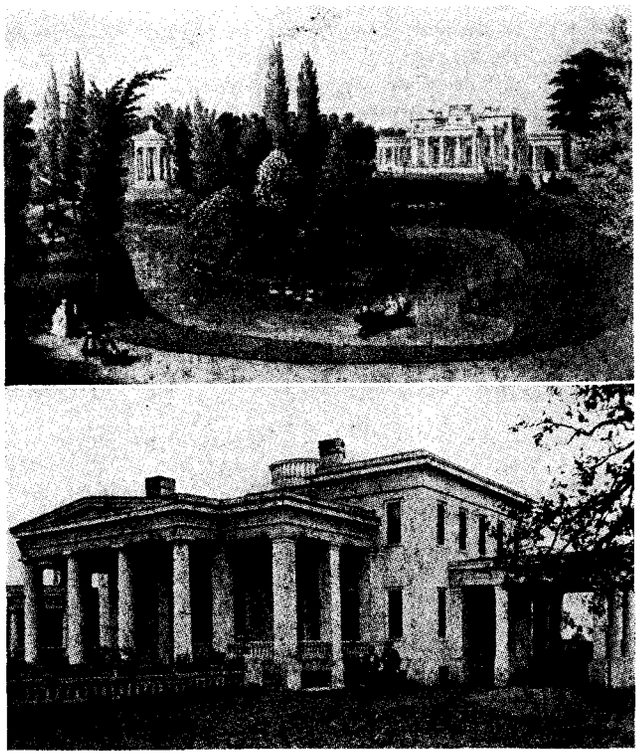
1932: F. J. Turner, "The Significance of Sections in American History."

1933: Herbert Agar, "The People's Choice."

1934: C. M. Andrews, "The Colonial Period in American History."

1935: A. C. McLaughlin, "The Constitutional History of the United States."

The list shows at a glance that, commendably, no single principle has determined the awards. In 1926 the prize goes to a scholarly investigation of an intricate diplomatic negotiation which was not of first-rank importance; such an award shows a willingness to recognize a specialist's research. In the following year it goes to a philosophical inquiry which, a quarter of a century ago, would hardly have been admitted under the definition of history. Sometimes the award is obviously made to the book itself—notably in 1928, when it goes to a brilliant enlargement of Civil War history written by a young and comparatively obscure man. Sometimes it is just as obviously made to



BEFORE THE WAR AND AFTER

Two views of Gainswood, an Alabama plantation palace. From "Life and Labor in the Old South."

Next Week

ANGELS IN UNDRESS
By MARK BENNEY
Reviewed by George Dangerfield

GALLOWS HILL
By FRANCES WINWAR
Reviewed by William Rose Benét

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the author, in recognition of a distinguished career. McLaughlin's "Constitutional History," for instance, is not an important book, and Van Tyne's book is one volume of a series.

As a whole, the list is orthodox and even academic. It does, to be sure, contain one volume of intellectual history, one experiment in journalism, and one book which, for want of a better term, must be called autobiography. But, in spite of these ventures into the outer world, the awards seem to define history primarily as political and institutional history. There is no economic history on the list, except as Turner's book may come under the term. Such an omission is striking and even dubious, but the omission of social history is even more so. It seems odd that, in a ten-year period, no single volume of either economic or social history worthy of the prize appeared and no historian achieved enough in either field to have his career as a whole recognized by the prize.

To a student of history two awards seem mistaken in themselves. Whatever they may be as raw material, General Pershing's memoirs are hardly history, and Mr. Agar's "The People's Choice" is clearly an essay in polemics. A different question is raised by Professor Schmitt's "Coming of the War." Both its scholarship and its findings were vigorously attacked in the journals of history when it appeared, and it is one of the few histories in our time that have evoked a formal rebuttal. That does not necessarily impugn it, and I venture to guess that it would have roused less hostility if it had been published a few years later. Nevertheless in giving it a prize the committee took sides in a controversy and, what is more important, violated the specific terms of the Pulitzer bequest. The book deals with the events leading up to the outbreak of the war in Europe, which are not the history of the United States, and there is no American material in it. If such a book is eligible for the prize, then it is hard to see how any history written by an American is ineligible. That, of course, may be an excellent thing, but certainly the committee should publicly declare the extension of its interests.

Much graver doubts arise when one turns from the prizewinners to other books published in the same years. In 1926, for instance, when the prize went to a specialist's monograph, Mark Sullivan's "The Turn of the Century" and A. H. Cole's "The American Wool Manufacture" were published. Apart from these two books it was a lean year but the first of them initiated an enterprise that is permanently valuable, and the other is an economic study of absolute importance in itself and of great use to subsequent historiography. From any point of view both of them are more important than the book which got the prize. It is, besides, highly doubtful whether monographic history should ever be recognized under the terms set by the bequest.

1933 was an unusually rich year. A. M. Schlesinger's "Rise of the City" was the first study by a qualified historian of one of the most important forces of the nineteenth century, an enlargement and new synthesis of historical material, and a brilliant achievement in social history. Lewis C. Gray's "History of Agriculture in the Southern United States" closed one of the worst gaps in American historiography and was obviously a book of permanent importance. Dexter Perkins's "The Monroe Doctrine, 1829-1867" and J. P. Baxter's "The Introduction of the Ironclad War Ship'" were major works in important fields by leading authorities. To choose among these four books might have been difficult, but an award to any of them would have been intelligent. If fearful of prematurely acknowledging the rise of social history, the committee might have unexceptionably chosen one of the last three. Or it might have determined to recognize social history, years after all historians have become social historians, even those who decry the name, and might have given the prize to one of its landmarks. But the award of the prize to Mr. Agar's brilliant special pleading, in such a year as this, raises a serious doubt about the competence of the committee—or of those in whom the final authority is vested.

Or take 1931, when the prize went to the worst book on the list, General Pershing's. Both J. D. Hicks's "The Populist Revolt" and T. C. Blegen's "Norwegian Migration to the United States" (a pioneering work in an important field) are better books than some that have received the prize in other years, and much more entitled to it than Pershing's. And in the same year appeared Walter P. Webb's "The Great Plains." From any point of view this is unquestionably one of the most important histories that have been published in this generation. A work of striking originality and ingenuity, it deals with a section of our country and a portion of our past which history had not satisfactorily studied, and it brings to them a set of instruments new to history. It is the only new, enlarging, fructifying *kind* of history since the rise of the social historians, and it has broken a path which is certain to be fruitfully followed by other historians. Its value is obvious to anyone who is at all acquainted with contemporary work—and was officially recognized by competent authorities two years later, when it received a Loubat prize.

"NEW JOURNALISM"
Reproduced from "'The Rise of the City."

The Loubat award, which is also administered by Columbia University, is made at five-year intervals for "the best work printed and published in the English language on the history, geography, ethnology, philology, or numismatics of North America." The field is much wider than that covered by the Pulitzer award and the selections are made by professional scholars—in this instance the committee was Isaiah Bowman, Arthur M. Schlesinger, and Verner W. Crane. In 1933 the first prize was awarded to C. O. Paullin's and J. K. Wright's "Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States," a work of great scope and enormous erudition; the second prize went to Mr. Webb's book, which was thus held to be superior to any other work of American history in the five-year period. One would expect *a fortiori* to find a Loubat prizewinner getting the Pulitzer Prize in its year, but the last previous Loubat prize went to Osgood's monumental "American Colonies in the Eighteenth Century," which also failed to receive the Pulitzer award.

Let me repeat, there is no such thing as a "best" volume of history in any year, and all we can ask of any committee is an intelligent choice. When I had got this far it seemed obvious to me that a number of the Pulitzer awards had fallen short of that requirement. It was preposterous to prefer "The People's Choice" to "The Rise of the City"; it was downright idiotic to prefer "My Experiences in the

(*Continued on page* 14)

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Between Two Wars

THE OLD BUNCH. By Meyer Levin. New York: The Viking Press. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by JAMES T. FARRELL

MEYER LEVIN was graduated from the University of Chicago in 1924, and since then, his career has been most versatile. He has been a reporter on *The Chicago Daily News*, and at one time seemed to be groomed as a successor to Ben Hecht in Chicago journalism. He is the author of several novels, has traveled in Europe and Palestine, has been a professional puppeteer, written a radical play which was banned by Chicago officials when the Federal Theatre Project was prepared to stage it, and is at present an editor and motion picture critic on *Esquire*. "The Old Bunch" is not only his most serious piece of work; it is also one of the most ambitious novels yet attempted by any fiction writer of his generation, a work which demands a discipline and intelligence that are as yet unmatched by most novelists of his age.

The old bunch consists, principally, of a group of Jewish boys and girls who were graduating from high school on the West Side of Chicago in the year 1921. They are representative of their generation. Their fates and destinies, their failures and successes become entangled in the warp and woof of those events which constitute the social history of both Chicago and America from the years 1921 to 1934. They become lawyers, doctors, business men, school teachers, radicals, mothers and housewives, society figures. Some rise above their class and station; others are declassed. Their lives become a representative cross-section of the American middle and lower middle class. Despite the specific mannerisms, patterns of consciousness and speech which reveal them as Jewish, they are also representatively American in their feelings. What happens to them has happened to Nordics, Irish, Italian boys and girls of the same generation. This generation reaches adolescence as favored sons and daughters of history. Their parents have slaved to establish a position in the New World. It is composed of first, second, third generation Americans, drifting constantly away from the religion and the habits of their forefathers. It has been too young to fight in the war, and appears likely to be too old to become the soldiers of the next conflict. It reaches maturity in the days of the boom, and in many instances, its members rise to quick success. The profits of American economic development fall into its lap, and then in 1929, and the ensuing years of the depression, these profits are rudely snatched from it, and it is forced into a gruelling fight for self-maintenance.

Here is a large and serious theme, and a panoramic canvas. However, the novel suffers from its very ambitiousness. Mr. Levin's treatment must be extensive rather than intensive. Instead of being able to concentrate on one or a few characters, he must concern himself with many. The novel is written in a series of brief episodes, the greater proportion of them from half a page to two pages. He switches from character to character, and from tendency to tendency. His method and very ambitiousness exact a penalty. The novel loses force and drama. At no place in the novel can he present a fully detailed development of a situation. He must present a sketchy and rapid picture, and he must secure movement in over-concentrated incidents. In consequence, although he is more successful than Dos Passos in "Manhattan Transfer," he is not permitted to give a full sense of the development and change of his characters. We know them as we know acquaintances in life, seeing them come and go at odd moments of crisis and passingly on street corners, in court rooms, homes, bars, and the like. We do not know them as we know characters who are fully exposed and revealed to us in fiction.

Mr. Levin evidently seeks to overleap the limitations of his theme and method through organization and structure, but his efforts become mechanical and obvious, at least in certain sections. He organizes his events frequently around certain general conceptions, particularly the conceptions that life, on the one hand, is a ceaseless process of competition, and, on the other hand, that life is a process in which infinite possibilities of balance, harmony, and compensation are constantly achieved. In consequence, the book becomes a kind of recapitulation both of American social history in recent years and of tendencies in realistic fiction. He touches upon the sources and the methods of several generations of novelists, amongst them, Dreiser, Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis, Abraham Cahan, Dos Passos, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. He intelligently organizes material and detail from the fields of domestic relationships, art, science, medicine, university life, capital and labor, real estate and finance, politics, legal procedure. His eye for details is that of a keen reporter, and he is surprisingly accurate and free from anachronisms considering the extent and diversity of his material. However, he is weakest on sports.

In conclusion, "The Old Bunch" impresses me as being one of the most serious and ambitious novels yet produced by the current generation of American novelists.

James T. Farrell is the author of "Studs Lonigan," "A World I Never Made," and "A Note on Literary Criticism."

DRAWING BY ROCKWELL KENT
From the jacket of "Very Heaven."

This Side of Heaven

VERY HEAVEN. By Richard Aldington. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by HERBERT J. MULLER

CHRIS HEYLIN, the outspoken hero of Richard Aldington's latest novel, is a symbol of the young generation and its problems in a world having convulsions. He has to leave college because of his family's financial troubles; and in the course of seeking in London a design for living as well as means of livelihood, he has some unhappy adventures in sex, encounters in his elders always more stupidity, cant, and injustice, and discovers that his only inheritance is frustration. He discovers, in other words, that there is little bliss in being alive in this dawn, and that being young is this side of "very heaven." Yet he does not give in: the epilogue to a series of failures is a high resolve to try once more, to wrest from chaos a rational, responsible existence. We leave Chris on a cliff in Portugal, accepting the universe.

This story Mr. Aldington tells with all the brilliant savagery for which he is known. He evades few of the issues and excuses none of the blunders of his society. In his keen intelligence and relentless wit he recalls the Aldous Huxley of "Antic Hay," but he has incomparably more passion; he does not indulge in the wry laugh and the dreary pleasures of disillusionment. And he can write very well indeed, even without trying as hard as he sometimes does. The only trouble is that he too seldom takes the pains to write a novel.

He is so busy discussing sex, for instance, that he neglects the elementary duty of embodying his ideas in living characters: the various women to whom Chris Heylin is attracted are little more than names with a few adjectives attached. Chris himself seldom emerges as

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a compelling personality, a human being in whom one can become deeply interested; one listens to him constantly, but one rarely sees him. In general Mr. Aldington is inclined to talk about his scenes and characters instead of rendering them, and though his talk is excellent, it is the stuff of essay, not fiction. His indignation, moreover, makes him fearfully explicit, prodigal with epithet. All this is the more unfortunate because when he does allow his characters to take their story into their own hands, they sometimes tell it admirably.

I suspect, however, that "Very Heaven" will be criticized more for holes in its argument than for deficiencies in its artistry. Mr. Aldington passionately denounces war, fascism, and all the evils of capitalism, as he has been doing for some time—notably in "Death of a Hero" and "All Men Are Enemies"; but what, critics are going to ask, does he propose to do about it? He has no formula for salvation, no program, and indeed seems to distrust programs that, like communism, endorse violent means and sacrifice the individual to abstractions. Apparently he even lacks confidence that civilization will survive this crisis; the dim light in which we live is perhaps of dawn, perhaps of twilight. Although he is against any form of regimentation, repression, brutal destruction, all he opposes to them is a somewhat shrill protest, a somewhat desperate trust "in free impulse and the quick brain."

What especially weakens Mr. Aldington's work, however, is not his indecisiveness but his uncontrollable indignation. In his rage he distorts his people so much that they cease to be representative of the evils he is attacking. He pummels scarecrows in the delusion that he is slaying dragons. In short, he proves nothing by this very special case; and though this would ordinarily be a silly criticism, it is pertinent when he has so obviously set out to prove something.

Herbert J. Muller is a member of the faculty of Purdue University.

If We Live

By Victor Keller

UNDER the burden
of my soul and body
her great loveliness
grows whole.

If we live long enough
she will have found out
what made flesh and blood
start from the ground.

If we live long enough
it will be plain
between the earth and us
what ties remain.

Under the burden
of my delight
she will discover
both day and night.

Innocent Doctor

WE ARE NOT ALONE. By James Hilton. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1937. $2.

Reviewed by Lloyd C. Douglas

ANY rapid reader, impatient to learn why Doctor Newcome was hanged—a dismaying eventuality predicted in the prologue—can dispose of Mr. Hilton's new story in an hour and a half. The brief book follows the Hilton tradition in respect to the importance of reading between the lines. The publishers have obligingly left plenty of room.

Here you have a heart-warming picture of a pipe-smoking, untidy, detached, absent-minded little man in his late forties, spending all forenoon in the operating-room (where he came alive and really enjoyed himself), all afternoon bicycling through the narrow streets, trotting up and down steep and shabby stairways, and two hours every evening in his office

JAMES HILTON

ministering to such miseries as were able to get about on foot.

Jessica, his wife, lean, prim, five feet ten, and the daughter of a rural dean, owned their residence. Nature had impishly paid Jessica off for her stiff decorum by requiring her to whelp a son, Gerald, whose jitters, tantrums, and assorted neuroses were becoming quite unattractive. Only David could tranquilize the lad, condone his nastiness, and deal understandingly with his ingenious lies.

One night there was a call from Calderbury's not very high-toned theater that a dancer had met with an accident. David found Leni in a ragged rathole on the top floor of a cheap lodginghouse, her arm dangling, her purse empty, her tongue exclusively German. At first, Jessica seemed much pleased when Leni came to serve as companion and governess to the detestable Gerald, for the girl was promptly successful in dealing with the problem. Then the war came, changing everybody's character but Leni's who, unfortunately, was still a German.

Jessica's growing jealousy of Leni, and the subsequent death of Jessica under circumstances resembling murder, lead to the dismaying dénouement. Zealous in the cause of justice (for Doctor Newcome would have been no more likely to commit a murder than Mr. Chips), the earnest reader may be amazed if not annoyed by the hapless hero's apathy while being tried on the flimsiest sort of circumstantial evidence and will find it difficult to believe that the friendly little city of Calderbury gave consent to the execution of its most useful citizen. Some may wonder, also, how a man who had placed so high a value on human life could be so drowsily unconcerned about his own.

"We Are Not Alone" strongly tempts the reader to be so indignant that he is likely to miss the more subtle implications of David's philosophy, expressed while waiting placidly in jail. Recalling our own savagery of thought and speech, twenty years ago, we should be able to understand the callosity of Calderbury, the fanaticism of a war-scared court, and the unutterable weariness of an innocent defendant. Only in this mood does one stand a fair chance of taking of a trial balance on one's own thought about death in relation to other inevitables.

Lloyd C. Douglas is the author of "Green Light" and "White Banners."

Good Mean Fun

THE ANTIGUA STAMP. By Robert Graves. New York: Random House. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by George Stevens

ROBERT GRAVES has written a British version of The War Between Men and Women. It takes the form of a feud between Oliver Price and his sister Jane, beginning in childhood over a stamp collection, and continuing for some thirty years—until 1946, in fact—in a comic crescendo of spitefulness, meanness, and generally low-down behavior on both sides. Jane wins at every point, because she is clever and unscrupulous, and Oliver is merely stupid and greedy. The childhood scenes are conventional, but later on the book turns into an extravaganza. Jane becomes a fashionable dramatist, and her fantastic theatrical career is largely devoted to caricaturing Oliver on the stage. This part of the story, and the series of lawsuits which follow—in which Jane double-crosses not only Oliver, but her own lifelong friend and partner—is elaborately unconvincing, but none the less amusing to read.

The significance of all this comes out pretty close to zero. Spite is meaningless in isolation from all other human qualities. But it has considerable comic value; and if you like good mean fun, and don't mind associating through 326 pages with two of the most unpleasant characters in contemporary fiction, you can have a good time with "The Antigua Stamp."

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The Thermidor in Russia

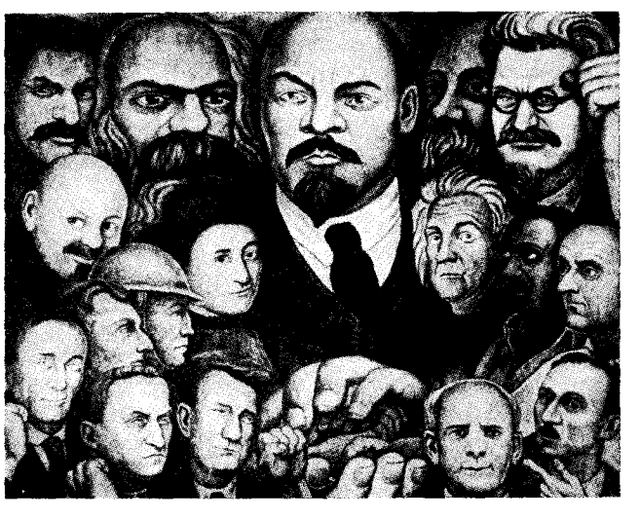
THE REVOLUTION BETRAYED. By Leon Trotsky. Translated by Max Eastman. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

THIS is a survey of the last twenty years of Russian history, definitely not for those who want an easy introduction to the subject. Trotsky writes as a controversialist who assumes his readers are already familiar with the framework of soviet political and economic life. He has a subtle and penetrating intelligence, devoted with bewildering alternation now to the objective, now to the wishful, ordering of facts. He has a style which, even in the lively and quite unpedantic translation of Mr. Eastman, moves about among the metaphysical abstractions of Hegel and Marx in a way still foreign to most of us Westerners. But for those who have the patience to follow him, he has written a book about Russia more illuminating and important than any to appear in recent years, a much better analysis of the present situation in that country than is offered by the highly praised work of the Webbs.

Trotsky builds his picture around a formula once thrown off by Lenin: Russia in 1937 is "a bourgeois state without a bourgeoisie." It is not a socialist society, for it has not eliminated the kind of struggle—contention for the means of satisfying the basic human needs—which must be eliminated before you can have a socialist society. Far from "withering away," the state in modern Russia is assuming bureaucratic and police forms typical of the more decadent forms of the bourgeois state. Basically, this continuation in Russia of what is really class struggle is due not so much to the obvious incompetence and villainy of the leaders—Trotsky is here the consistent Marxian at whatever cost to his personal hatred for the Stalinites—but rather to the fact that the productivity of Russian labor is so low that there isn't enough of the bare necessities to go around.

Trotsky cuts most skillfully through the bombast and false statistics of the present Russian government to bring out this simple fact of slow *per capita* production. He points out how in past years a managed currency has made it possible to conceal what a free currency would have exposed at once: the difference between what was produced and what was wanted. The recent return to stable money, and still more the return to piecework—which is what Stakhanovism really means—seem to him a sensible admission that the soviet economy is still an economy of scarcity, the relative effectiveness of which must be measured as the relative effectiveness of bourgeois economics is measured. For the Russia of Stalin is no longer attempting to achieve even the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is, historically, where France was after the Thermidorean reaction; it retains the words "soviet" and "socialist" as Bonaparte retained the word "republic." It differs from contemporary bourgeois states only in this, that the ruling class, the new soviet bureaucracy (with its dependents, some ten to fifteen percent of the whole population) is a privileged but not yet a propertied class. It will, Trotsky thinks, either consolidate its position through the acquisition of property rights, particularly if state monopoly of foreign trade is broken down by pressure from Russia's capitalist allies, or will be overthrown by a new social revolution. This latter is inevitable if another world war breaks out, since the proletariat in other countries will also rise against their masters. Trotsky is still hankering after a real revolution on a world-wide scale.



"PROLETARIAN UNITY" BY DIEGO RIVERA
From "Portrait of America" (Covici-Friede).

The book will certainly have an interesting reception. Conservatives will hail it with joy, for it exposes the gap between the word and the deed in modern Russia more effectively than any propagandist of the Right has done. The orthodox of the party line will explode with fury. The Trotskyites and the other heretical sects will nod and sigh. Some who fancy themselves as detached observers will no doubt be led to the easy but quite erroneous conclusion that this book is another illustration of the fatal weakness of socialists in general to indulge in doctrinal quarrels. But a tendency to doctrinal quarrels and the growth of heresies is not a sure sign that a movement is on the decline. Heresy was never so common or so varied in the history of Christianity as in the first four centuries after Christ, when Christianity was sweeping the Mediterranean world and the New Rome rising on the ruins of the Old.

Crane Brinton is the author of "The Lives of Talleyrand."

Making of an Irishman

ARMY WITHOUT BANNERS. By Ernie O Malley. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by RAYMOND J. SONTAG

HERE is the story of the making of an Irishman. It is a good story in itself; and at the end the reader will be able to understand better the history of the Irish nation. The O Malleys were thoroughly Anglicized. Their mistake was the surrender of their children to Irish servants—how many throw backs, particularly among Irish families, can be explained by servants? The mistake of England was the slow martyrdom of the Easter rebels of 1916—Machiavelli had demonstrated four centuries before that blood-letting should be quick and final. The two mistakes changed Ernie O Malley from a medical student into a rebel. For the next five years his life was a part of "the scrap." Now, fifteen years later, he has set down his adventures in a narrative which could not have been more fresh or exciting if recorded when the events took place.

It is the story of never ceasing, but never successful, efforts to give organization and training to bands of young guerillas, a story in which spectacular incidents—raids, arrests, betrayals, escapes—seem at first to compete only with vivid descriptions of Irish countryside. Slowly there becomes perceptible the demoralization of troops unaccustomed to fighting an invisible enemy, and the wavering drift of opinion to the side of the rebels. Occasionally, the joy of action was clouded by the thought of what would come when the fight was over, when the energies now concentrated on fighting the alien master were thrown into the fight of class against class, town against country. Action was the best remedy for such doubts, until action suddenly stopped. In July, 1921, the order came to cease operations. "What did it mean? And why had senior officers no other information than a bald message?" Revolutionary leaders from ancient Greece to contemporary Germany provide the answer: to win requires one kind of agents; to rule requires another.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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What's Wrong With Criticism in America?

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR asks us this question, asks us to reply in 250 words. We shall need more than that to answer, but perhaps they can find their 250 words in these columns.

What's wrong with American fiction? What's wrong with American morals? What's wrong with American politics? What's wrong with American literary criticism? These questions begin to grow wearisome. They are all based upon an implicit assumption that something is, not just wrong, but radically, hopelessly wrong. They are all by-products of that disintegrating, debunking, anarchical post-war period of the twenties, when the intellectuals of the country, finding their watches slow, began to take them apart and spit on the works. What was wrong with Greek morals? What was wrong with the Hebrew sense of humor? Plenty; and there are plenty of things wrong with America, but, for heaven's sake, don't let's always begin with the assumption that the watch is a rotten watch! Can you make another like it?

As for American literary criticism, it is at least as healthy as criticism elsewhere; indeed it is less dogged and diverted by the ideologies of political and social controversy. If there are no great critics visible, men who, like Sainte-Beuve in France, Arnold in England, Emerson in an earlier America, compel a new orientation between life and literature, this may well be because the body of literature itself, and particularly American literature, is being subjected to a new analysis by scholars whose patient search for factual truth is at least a first step in a new criticism. Our intellectual climate favors neither generalization nor the perception of significances, both of which are vital for criticism. Nor is a period whose radical thinkers swallow the economic interpretation of history, including literature, whole, likely to produce critics more interested in art than in propaganda.

Nevertheless, and thanks in part to the impact of new ideas—Freudianism, Marxism, fascism, the cult of the pioneer, and the methodology of science—upon a criticism grown genteel and academic, the golden age of American *reviewing* has unquestionably been the last two decades. Never have so many active minds from so many areas of thought rushed, or been dragged, into the fray. Readers who remember with regret the admirable reviewing essays of the old *Nation*, or approve the often excellent leading articles of the *Times Literary Supplement*, forget that only a handful of books and these usually in poetry, history, or biography, were given their place in the sun by these leisurely and thoughtful studies. Ignorance, prejudice, flippancy, but most of all a skillful ignorance, was the best that most books could hope for by way of criticism until the twenties. Let those who doubt work as we have in bound files of newspapers and magazines! It may be asserted unhesitatingly that the batting average in exact knowledge, in objectivity, in sincerity, and in competence in analysis, of the responsible American reviewer today is higher, much higher, than it has ever been before. Nor does he, like his predecessors of a century ago, cover his ignorance or expand his ego by smoke clouds of whirling words. Reviewing in America is far more reliable than reviewing in England, far more honest than reviewing in France.

Our objection is to the form of the question at the head of this article, and to the assumption behind it. If *The American Spectator* cares to ask, What can be done to improve American literary criticism? a volume could be written in reply. Probably a futile volume, for it is our idea that if less were written about criticism, and more enlightened and passionate thinking put into criticism itself, we should all be gainers.

But one suggestion may be ventured, even in an editorial. If there is a lack in American reviewing it is the love of books. This much you could say for the genteel reviewer of the *fin-de-siècle*, that he loved his book; and of the sputtering ego of the early nineteenth century that he could hate his book. We are all so concerned with regionalism, nationalism, socialism, modernism, that the book as book too often gets neglected. Its control of ideas or history or behaviorism gets reviewed, but its living whole (when it is alive) is left for the reader to get if he can. Some reviewers are absorbed with the pioneers (whom we begin to find tedious), and some with the South, and some with the proletariat, and some with the reinterpretation of America. They know their stuff,—no shoddy history passes them by, no characters untrue to a contemporary ideology; and this is excellent. Yet fiction and drama and poetry are not social science, not even history. They stand and fall (as do many histories and biographies) not by their usefulness to our knowledge of the American scene, but by the delight they give. We can never thank enough these informed minds who, even though they seem unaware of the significance of the timeless books of literature, yet at least with their common sense and their expert knowledge have made the sentimental blurbing of the mere enthusiast seem childish and irrelevant, as indeed it is. But blurbing is merely the pimpled face of a book lover fed on sweets. Book loving is as essential as ever it was for a criticism which considers the true aim of literature to be a lifting and clearing of the imagination, and, in the root sense of the word, a delight. For the book lover never forgets, and the history of literature gives him abundant confirmation, that no book lives in the imagination just because of Arkansas, or Freudianism, or the proletariat in its pages, but only because it has delighted the imagination by its art.

H. S. C.

William Dean Howells

The centennial of William Dean Howells finds his critical reputation still in flux. At the time of his death he seemed to have long outlived his era, and since criticism was being forthright, he was generally spoken of as timid, time-serving, and superficial. That was largely because he avoided the problems of sex and showed a fastidious dislike of hairy-chested expressions. Today a different set of critical clichés has restored him to something like favor: his part in the Utopian literature of the early nineties is remembered, he is praised for having defended the Chicago anarchists in a period of public hysteria, and it is felt that his humanitarian sentiments would have made a proletarian artist of him if he could have lived in our more enlightened day.

Neither judgment is very realistic. Howells's historical importance is primarily that of a technician. Even more than Henry James he was responsible for giving the American novel form, and even more than Mark Twain he taught American writers to avoid rhetoric and to write simply, clearly, and straightforwardly. Writers of today who have never read him are nevertheless in his debt for some of the cadences they write, for some of the technical competence they have acquired, and for something of the color and clarity of the prose known as modern American. Apart from that, the very fastidiousness and inhibition that robbed his fiction of virility made it also a faithful repository of antiquarian material belonging to the last half of the nineteenth century. His mind was neither very powerful nor startlingly original, but his perceptions were sure, his integrity was absolute, and his craftsmanship as good as any in our literature. He mapped for the first time much of the area that American fiction was to explore, and he gave it instruments of precision for the exploration. That assures him a modest immortality.

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Letters to the Editor: *Anne Carroll Moore on the Children's Book Shortage*

The problem of replacing worn out books in public libraries operating on reduced budgets has long been serious. In a recent newspaper interview, Miss Anne Carroll Moore, Superintendent of Work with Children at the New York Public Library, emphasized this problem as it relates to children's books. The editors wrote to Miss Moore, asking for statistics and other details of the children's book shortage, and we are glad to print her reply herewith.

Children and Book Famine

SIR:—A recent open discussion of the acute shortage of children's books in the branch libraries and the Extension Division of the New York Public Library has led to inquiries which I venture to think have a bearing on books and reading in general. That children should be starving for books to read in the richest city of the country, in the heart of a great publishing center, and in the thick of educational experiments concerned with reading interests, might seem a fantastic and unbelievable state of things did not bare library shelves and the clamor of unsatisfied children bear daily witness to the need for books.

What has caused this condition? Never adequately stocked to fully nourish and sustain the voluntary reading interests of the children of the city, the children's rooms of the New York Public Library have known poverty in varying degree for many years. Every measure of conservation has been tried but books will wear out. Rehabilitation is now required. The present sharp crisis is due to a reduction of budget allowing the purchase of less than one half the number of books normally added from year to year. During the past four years from 1933 to 1937, 236,751 worn out children's books were removed from the collection and only 173,662 were added. These figures include books added to non-circulating collections for reference and reading room use as well as for home use.

The turn-over in children's books is rapid and the wear and tear under the most favorable conditions is very great. Heavy duplication of titles most constantly in demand and full representation of subjects in which interest is keen, such as Aviation, Astronomy, Chemistry, Photography, Exploration, Archeology (a growing interest), Poetry, Plays, Stamp Collecting, Drawing, Music, etc., are needed to satisfy growing boys and girls who turn to the public library both to read for pleasure and for actual information which is up-to-date and reliable.

It unquestionably costs more to maintain a successful library for boys and girls in the 1930's than it did in 1910. Why shouldn't it? Yet no allowance has been made for this growth and change. New interests have been born and new books have been published to meet them.

No one is more critical of the factual soundness of his library than the intelligent boy of eleven to thirteen. Both reference and circulating collections must meet his challenge. It must be remembered, however, that such a boy and his fellows represent only a small part of the potential users of a great metropolitan library. Thousands of children of many races are *learning* to *read* there. They need an indeterminate number of books which are actually easy to read. Thousands rather than hundreds of easy books. Other children are rediscovering books of perennial appeal, and if they are to read them when they will mean most, many more duplicates must be provided. Certain books have their times and seasons of strongest appeal. Reading interests among children are contagious and are more often heightened and fed by their own early discoveries than by lists of required reading.

"HE'S UNMASKING HER IDEOLOGY."

In reply to the question, Can you give a list of some of the titles of children's books that are most in demand and most need replacement? I gladly supply the following titles:

"Pinocchio"; "Tales from Grimm"; "Andersen's Fairy Tales"; "Brownies—Their Book"; "Tom Sawyer"; "Alice in Wonderland"; "Little Women"; "Huckleberry Finn"; "The Blue Fairy Book"; "The Jungle Books"; "Robinson Crusoe"; "Swiss Family Robinson"; "Little Princess"; "Under the Lilacs"; "The Last of the Mohicans"; "Floating Island"; "The Wind in the Willows"; "Meggy McIntosh"; "The Call of the Wild"; "Mysterious Island"; "Hans Brinker"; "The Arabian Nights"; "Peter and Wendy"; "Smoky."

To the question, How many of your books are replaced annually? the answer is not so easy.

In 1931, 103,349 books were added. In 1934 only 37,588. Immediate need would give precedence to certain titles at a given time regardless of the balance of a collection.

To the question, How many books are discarded without replacement? exact statistics are not available. In 1931, 102,048 volumes were deducted. In 1934, 66,477 worn out books were removed.

It can be fairly stated that the number of duplicates of popular titles of books every child should have a chance to read in childhood has been reduced from twenty-five to two at a given circulation branch.

At least one million books are needed right now to feed the book-hungry children of Manhattan, the Bronx, and Staten Island. Vast areas of the Bronx are still without library resources. More books and still more books in childhood until there are enough for all who show the slightest inclination to read will have a more positive effect upon the adult reading problems of the future than has yet been estimated. Allowing a wide margin for non-readers of books, both children and adults, this stubborn fact remains—there have never been books enough to go round among the children who are readers in the New York Public Library.

The love of reading for reading's own sake finds its stimulus in books of many kinds rather than in theories about reading. Nearly everything else has happened to reading except the provision of an abundance of good books to be read at the time when reading is both a challenge and an adventure. There is no more just or generous reader than the boy or girl of thirteen or fifteen and never in my experience have the boys and girls of this age been so forward-looking, yet so firmly established in their reading interests. Shakespeare is no longer a name. He has come alive for boys and girls of Negro Harlem in "Richard II," played by Maurice Evans. Walter de la Mare is a poet with whom the youngest are familiar because they like what he has written. Hans Christian Andersen not only wrote fairy tales. In these tales he provides a guide book to Denmark as Ruth Bryan Owen bears testimony in "Denmark Caravan."

Invariably do children respond to art and literature on their own terms rather than to diluted substitution which denies their status as readers for reading's sake.

ANNE CARROLL MOORE,
Superintendent of Work with Children.
The New York Public Library,
New York City.

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The Human Side of Mathematics

MEN OF MATHEMATICS. By E. T. Bell. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1937. $5.

Reviewed by JOHN RIORDAN

THIS, we may take it, is the *summa summarum* of Dr. Bell's work, begun in "The Queen of the Sciences" (1931), highlighting the development of modern mathematics. For the story of mathematicians must clearly be the story of mathematics, and Dr. Bell has accepted the challenge. He has woven the lives of the mathematicians into the story of their work. Readers of his earlier books will not need to be told that his pages sparkle with wit, bristle with opinion, and shine with the wisdom of an active mathematical life.

It should be emphasized, as both author and publishers are at pains to make clear, that the mathematics involved requires for its understanding nothing more than general intelligence and a rudimentary education, though working with it is another question. Anyone who feels the fascination of these high priests of science may satisfy his curiosity without weeks of hard labor; at the least he will find what makes the mathematicians, if not the mathematics, go.

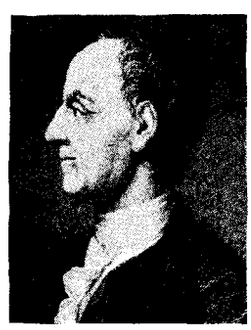
PASCAL

For the mathematicians exemplify, many times (as purists of the intellect) in a pure form, a variety of human behavior. They come from all classes, indeed seem to constitute a classless society. Taking Dr. Bell's three greatest, Archimedes was an aristocrat, Newton middle class, Gauss rose from the peasantry. Pascal was a poet (in temper), a neurotic, and a religious man, whereas Monge was a bear of a man and an associate of Napoleon. Leibniz, the universal genius, was a supreme statesman; Laplace maintained a government position through a number of changes of administration, surely no mean practical feat; and Galois, the baby of them all (and the most radical politically) was so innocent that his work never found its way to the right places until after his death. Descartes, the philosopher, went to war to find peace for himself, and Archimedes, whose catapults turned back the Roman navy, was himself slain by a Roman soldier while engrossed in making some figures in sand. Leibniz and Newton, top-flight intellects, and their supporters, put all prima-donnas then, now, and hereafter to shame in a quarrel over priority in the invention of the calculus.

NEWTON

Two things were common property: undimmed mathematical power to the end of their days, and a supreme power of concentration and absorption. Archimedes, anointed with oil after his bath, would stand for hours scratching figures on his skin. Euler worked problems while holding the baby (he had a numerous flock). Poncelet revolutionized projective geometry, working in a Russian prison without books and sometimes without pencil and paper; he was one of the French officers in the Grand Army Napoleon deserted at Moscow. Euler's work continued through the blindness of his last years.

LEIBNIZ



EULER

Two superstitions about mathematicians are apparently unfounded. They are not necessarily impartial or even truthful; to paraphrase Dr. Bell, the pursuit of truth need not make a man truthful. Nor do they have an edge on the non-mathematician in the understanding or love of music.

As to the mathematics, there is scarcely a field on which Dr. Bell has not touched, often centrally. There are many books available on science without mathematics, many fewer on mathematics without science (some Dr. Bell has written himself). This is a book on science with mathematics (and the mathematicians) humanized to the extent of dealing with the notions and rationale rather than the actual working out.

One word of warning. Dr. Bell's temperament is apparently rationalistic, libertarian, even sometimes anti-clerical, and iconoclastic. Final judgments on particular mathematicians, in cases where this bias has a bearing, should not be made without consulting another source.

Let Them Say

THEY SAY THE FORTIES. By Howard Mumford Jones. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1937. $1.75.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

MANY years ago this reviewer pointed out evidence of divine discontent in the verses of another professor. Almost immediately the gentleman in question wrote a best-seller and departed from his cool colonnades. It is not implied that so awful a fate will necessarily overtake Professor Jones, but he must be careful, for like his predecessor he is not altogether at ease in Zion.

His little book consists of two sonnet sequences and a group of short lyrical poems, all written with grace and some with power. The volume takes its title from the first and longer sonnet sequence, which is concerned with the Weltanschauung of the years of a man's life between forty and fifty. There are a number of poems on intensive research into the region of lost time, on recollections that grow poignant as we hear the thunder and the shouting of the new masters of the waves, on the dissatisfaction that comes with success and a waistline, not to mention an approaching deadline. These subjects are familiar, but it is not too much to say that Professor Jones writes about them in a distinctive and distinguished manner.

> Look yon, the farthest star is in its place;
> Untroubled by us, Aldebaran as of old
> Burns in his quarter, and the moon and sun
> Are not deranged nor altered. This is gold,
> This, silver; the dew falls at night out of space—
> There are children still. What is it we have done?

There has been much anxious thought in the war generation on that subject, and Professor Jones has the merit of being pretty honest about it. On the debit side he may protest somewhat too much about vanished splendors and miseries, and likewise overplay the opinion that a lot of quadragenarian port is corked.

But these are minor carpings. The book in its whole form and pressure is a defiance of the cult that believes that obscurity is depth and that violence and vigor are synonyms. It comes much nearer to poetry, and is certainly more original, than a dozen pretentious works that have recently attempted to take Helicon by a coup de main, against the better judgment of William Watson. And this reviewer finds it pleasant to consider a scholar who can turn aside from the desert of research and the howling wilderness of instruction to write poetry not without elegance and fire.

N. B. I hope he never writes that best-seller.

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The Question of Relief

THEY SHALL NOT WANT. By Maxine Davis. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by MARTHA GELLHORN

MAXINE DAVIS has tackled one of the gloomiest and most confusing subjects to be found, and she has done an exciting job. There is room for a more inclusive and detailed study and there is room for a more compact summary of the problem of unemployment and the methods of relief. But here is a sound, interesting, dispassionate book which ought to help the taxpayer, as he groans over his paper, or probes his conscience in the night.

There are three major divisions in "They Shall Not Want." The first division deals with America: 1932, the howling crisis; a very brief summary of Federal relief policies; a detailed analysis of unemployment and relief in a sample city, Chicago; a general list of the failings of our relief system, with explanations. Division two is a cursory description of the functioning of the British unemployment relief system; and division three discusses, more briefly still, the remedies applied in Sweden. The book ends with suggestions for American relief, a compound of the best of what other countries have tried and found practical and our own inventions, both adapted to the national needs and the facts.

Miss Davis's book is not as concise as the foregoing outline would make it appear, which is regrettable. Her rich material suffers from not being tightly handled. I hope in later editions she will give up the novel-form of printing, and make her book into a text, with helpful subheadings to chapters, with all material on each subject collected in one place under one subheading, with her figures tabulated. I do not think the liveliness of the style, the clarity of the thinking, or the force of the subject matter, would be weakened by more order.

Miss Davis began looking at unemployment in Chicago under FERA. The unemployed, under FERA, got home relief (a grocery order) or work relief (a check for real money). She describes this system as it affects an individual, and she describes its general working. She objects violently to social workers; so did a large number of the unemployed. She has neglected some points in their favor. The FERA social workers were attempting to administer a program which changed its mind and its regulations about once a week, they were attempting to distribute money which arrived usually late and was rarely the same sum twice. I think the social workers would have administered any program they got, and at least they were non-political, hard-working, and devoted, if often maddening and narrow-minded. Work relief under FERA was much better than home relief, but the social worker was still present as boss of the job, again the fault of the program.

Then came WPA, like the dawn. Miss Davis brings out the two important points in connection with the change from FERA to WPA. Several years' bitter experience had taught the administrators of FERA something about relief. And the administration of FERA was on the whole free of politics. WPA bloomed overnight with a whole new set of political faces; it came into being like a whirlwind, and it was full of rich pickings.

Miss Davis does not think highly of WPA. She is aware of the taxpayer's viewpoint and she has the irritated indignation of an intelligent person who sees a program working sloppily and to no particularly good end. Her objections to WPA are that it is unduly expensive and inefficient, that useless projects are developed in haste, that there is bad supervision (because the supervision is badly paid, and also because positions are too often awarded for patronage, not for ability). She notes the way unemployed who cannot physically wield a pick and shovel are given a pick and shovel to wield, with the result that the work is poorly done.

She urges a program of heavy public works, planned in advance, for periods of crisis, as a quick means of absorbing an abnormally large supply of unemployed labor. And for unemployables, also always on hand, she recommends the automatic dole system of England, without the social worker thrown in.

Martha Gellhorn is the author of a study of the unemployed in the United States entitled "The Trouble I've Seen."

"HOT LUNCH"—*A WPA photo from "In 1936" (Henry Holt & Co.)*

No Shades Drawn

ANGRY DUST: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY. By Nikolai Gubsky. New York: Oxford University Press. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by NICHOLAS WREDEN

THE last ten years have brought an avalanche of autobiographies and reminiscences written by Russian emigrés. But to class "Angry Dust," Nikolai Gubsky's autobiography, among them —even among the best of them—is inadequate. Gubsky makes no effort to describe the course of events in Russia, or to show how these events have influenced his life. On the contrary, he says in the preface: "My intention is to write an autobiography in the strict sense of the word, that is to say, the story of how I became—or rather tried to become—myself." One is morally certain that if there never had been a Russian revolution, Nikolai Gubsky would still have left a record of what he felt and thought.

Considered apart from the contents the style of "Angry Dust" leaves much to be desired. Many of the incidents are very trivial. Much of the material is poorly systematized: keen and impersonal observations on literary critics and on general reading tastes in some inexplicable manner become interwoven with major emotional experiences. But these shortcomings are of a minor and inconsequential nature, and are completely overshadowed by the one outstanding merit of the book: the straightforward honesty with which the author probes into his thoughts and emotions.

To quote the preface again, Nikolai Gubsky says: "I happen to have no inhibitions about what my friends call 'undressing myself in public.' I simply do not see why any of my actions, positive, negative, or neutral, should be concealed from anybody." In most autobiographies a statement of this kind can be dismissed as a good intention, but in reading "Angry Dust" one is aware that the author adheres to his resolve without wavering and without sparing himself. The substance of his autobiography lies in his reactions to the human beings around him, in his emotional experiences, and in his thoughts on abstract subjects which are of universal interest. "Angry Dust" is an honest, civilized, and absorbing book.

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

The Folder

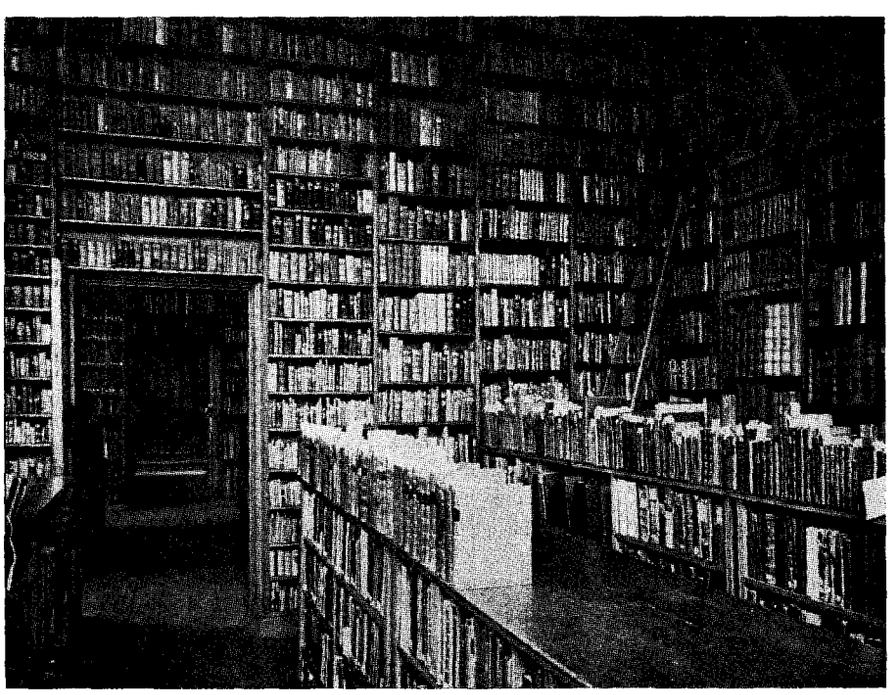
The New Bodleian

LIBRARIANS everywhere have their problems, but there can scarcely be any instance of a world-famous treasure-house so gravely in need of modernization as the Bodleian at Oxford. In some parts of the ancient building books have been (now for several years) three and four rows deep on the shelves. The administrative work of the library has had to be carried on in chance nooks and crannies, or in corners of the reading rooms. I reproduce a photo which shows how a room intended for reading and research has been converted to a stack. (And flashlights its only illumination.)

The new building projected for the Bodleian (designed by Sir G. G. Scott) is to be begun this year, and should be finished by 1939. It may be that somebody may know of somebody who would enjoy the secret pride of helping with this historic cause.

A bulletin from Oxford University makes this interesting statement:—

"When the new building is completed there will be room in it for about five million books, or more than three times as many volumes as are now to be found in Bodley and its dependent libraries. The use of this building alone, without further enlargement, will provide book-storage up to an epoch so remote that its requirements are unknown. 'If the present rate of increase holds good,' the Commissioners forecast, 'the new building will suffice for two centuries; for one, if the rate doubles during that time. We do not in fact know by what methods human utterance will be recorded at the end of either period.'"



OVERCROWDING IN THE BODLEIAN

The Other Boarder

(A Baker Street Essay)

We come now to the Mystery of the Other Boarder at 221-B Baker Street. We know a good deal else about him, but we do not know his name. We know that he was brought into the world by a certain Dr. James Winter who also took care of him during his infancy. Dr. Winter vaccinated the Other Boarder, opened an abscess for him, and blistered him for mumps.

Dr. Winter must have been a remarkable man. When his little charge grew up and himself took a medical degree, it is recorded that Dr. Winter was "the same as ever." Dr. Winter's age was impossible to discover, and his chronicler can only state that he "struck his stream as high up as George the Fourth, and even the Regency, but without ever getting quite to the source." For Dr. Winter, the death of Robert Peel "brought the history of England to a definite close."

To the Other Boarder (whose personality we must catch from its reflection in his description of the old doctor), Dr. Winter was clearly a survival of "a past generation." He had learned medicine under an "obsolete and forgotten system."

Dr. Patterson, on the other hand, was contemporaneous with the Other Boarder; yet it was Dr. Winter who, invited out of courtesy to watch a delicate operation on Sir John Sirwell, saved their reputations for these young men by stepping in where they had failed and bringing the operation to a successful issue. Dr. Winter had received Patterson and the Other Boarder most cordially when they settled into his neighborhood, but the patients' reception had been less warm.

An epidemic of influenza broke out: "One morning I met Patterson on my round," writes the Other Boarder, "and found him looking rather pale and fagged out. He made the same remark about me."

Both young doctors came down with influenza. "It was of Patterson naturally that I thought," continues the Other Boarder, "but somehow the idea was repugnant to me. I thought of his cold critical attitude. . . . I wanted something more soothing—something more genial.

"'Mrs. Hudson,' said I to my housekeeper, 'would you kindly run along to old Dr. Winter and tell him I should be obliged to him if he would step around.'

"She was back with her answer presently. 'Dr. Winter will come round in an hour or so, sir, but he has just been called in to attend Dr. Patterson.'"

Mrs. Hudson! "My Housekeeper"!

This incident is recorded by one A. C. Doyle* (an authority, by the way, frequently overlooked by students of Baker Street lore) who, as might readily be established, was in Edinburgh University Medical College when Dr. John Watson was a student there. (See "Bowling Green," June 27, 1936.)

Doyle undoubtedly knew Watson. Equally undoubtedly he knew the Other Boarder. But there are problems to be solved and questions to be answered before the Mystery of the Other Boarder can be cleared up. First of all, we must be sure that it was at 221-B Baker Street that the Mysterious Surgeon whom we must still call the Other Boarder had Mrs. Hudson for his housekeeper. We must approach this question with caution, for much more than the Identity of the Other Boarder depends upon our findings.

Remember, my dear fellow, we do not know that Mrs. Hudson was even in charge at 221-B Baker Street when Holmes and Watson took rooms there at the time of "the dark incidents of the *Study in Scarlet*." "The Housekeeper's" name is not mentioned in Watson's narrative of these singular and stirring events. "Mrs. Hudson, our landlady," comes out of her anonymity at the time

(*Continued on page* 14)

* "Tales of Medical Life" in chapter entitled "Behind the Times." John Murray, London.

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(36)

We halted near a bank. I had heard a starling mimic a disgruntled sparrow and then the clear whistle call of a blackbird. As we watched him feed on purple elder berries there was an orange blue-green flash and a petulant screech as a kingfisher slipped into yellow flags amongst the reeds at the bottom of the slope. Jerry gripped my arm: 'Look! . . . soldiers!' I saw two bits of khaki figures throw themselves down on the upper slope; bullets whizzed as we crossed through the thorn bushes on the bank . . . I used my Parabellum; I heard the loud, dull sound of Jerry's Winchester . . .

Heel to heel we angled our bodies and swivelled on the low after-grass of the slope. There was a strong sweet smell from the clover. We heard orders shouted. A rush of men came over with bayonets shining. There was something deadly about the rush, though none of them fired. I emptied two magazines, Jerry pulled back and forward at the piston magazine of the Winchester as the tin hats clumped together, yelling. We were kneeling; I felt a great warmth in my body and a rich joy as I filled my magazines.

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The Bowling Green

(*Continued from page* 12)

of the shocking affair at Pondicherry Lodge, which ended so romantically for Watson. Some time later (on the twentieth of March 1888, according to *A Scandal in Bohemia*) we know that Mrs. Hudson had been supplanted as "our housekeeper" at 221-B by a Mrs. Turner.

What had become of Mrs. Hudson during the time between Watson's marriage and the now historic affair of Irene Adler and the Royal Personage who preferred to be addressed as the Count Von Kramm? Did Mrs. Hudson sell her rooming house at 221-B Baker Street as a going concern? Was it while she was absent from that memorable address that she kept house for Dr. Winter's protégé? But Mrs. Hudson returned to Baker Street. Did Mrs. Turner find her distinguished guest too much for her? Did Mrs. Hudson, on the other hand, on her return to Baker Street, find it necessary, now that Dr. Watson had departed to a home of his own, to take on the Other Boarder?

It is a reasonable hypothesis, but one not capable of proof, that A. C. Doyle (who knew Watson intimately although he did not seem fully to understand him) recommended the Other Boarder to Mrs. Hudson. It is highly probable that he saw him there when he called at 221-B. Perhaps it was there that he heard the gently amusing and faintly pathetic anecdote, *Behind the Times*, which gives us our sole clue to the Other Boarder's existence. Undoubtedly, and for literary effect, he retold the story in the first person just as he had heard it.

Doubtless, time and the deliberation of the scholar will eventually disentangle every knot in Baker Street History.

JAMES KEDDIE.

The Pulitzer Prize in History

(*Continued from page* 4)

World War" to "The Great Plains." And, freely granting the importance of Parrington's book, was it nevertheless clearly superior to "The Rise of American Civilization"? Wasn't it slightly embarrassing, in fact, that the Beards' book had not received a Pulitzer Prize? And why had Ulrich B. Phillips's "Life and Labor in the Old South" failed to get one? Why had the prize never gone to a volume of "The History of American Life"? Several volumes of that series were brilliant histories and, even disregarding the individual works, wasn't it desirable to acknowledge that the series as a whole is the best general history of America ever published? And was the omission of economic history altogether by chance? Did not the conspicuous disregard not only of economic history but also of social history indicate a conception of history too uninformed, too conservative, or too timid to be serviceable under the specific terms of the Pulitzer bequest?

Here, since my opinion lacks authority, I decided to appeal to the profession. I listed from six to eight books published in each of the ten years and sent copies to fifteen leading American historians, asking them to check in each year the volume which they considered, on the whole, the best. I included important books from a variety of fields as well as those obviously of general significance, so that history might be defined as broadly as possible and the specialties might be represented. To minimize special opinion I chose my fifteen historians from different parts of the country, different age-groups, and different specialties. I included the Pulitzer prizewinner in each year but did not identify it as such and phrased my question so that it did not suggest the language of the award. If these historians showed anything like a common opinion, I believed, I should have an acceptable basis for criticism. I received replies from all but one of my questionnaires.

The result did not repudiate the Pulitzer selections as thoroughly as my own opinions would have done, but it nevertheless showed a severe disapproval. Of the fourteen historians who replied, only two selected as many as five (fifty percent) of the prizewinners as the best of their years; three of them selected only two; the average agreement with the Pulitzer list was four out of ten. The most nearly unanimous selections were Turner's "The Significance of Sections" and Andrew's "The Colonial Period," each of which got ten votes out of fourteen, and Parrington's "Main Currents," which got nine. Neither Pershing's "My Experiences" nor Agar's "The People's Choice" received any votes at all, which should be conclusive. Webb's "The Great Plains" received twelve votes, and Phillips's "Life and Labor in the Old South" (published in the year when the award went to Van Tyne's "The War of Independence") received eleven; these votes also should be conclusive. Four of the ten Pulitzer choices were rejected by large votes, one by a bare majority; two of them were approved by votes of ten in fourteen, one by a vote of nine, and one of the remaining two by a minority vote. For 1935, that is, more historians voted against McLaughlin's "Constitutional History" than for it, but no other book published that year got as many votes. The result may be summed up thus: fourteen leading American historians repudiated five of the last ten Pulitzer awards and voted that six of the ten books selected for them were not "the best book of the year upon the history of the United States."

If this committee of fourteen historians had made the awards, the Pulitzer Prizes of the last ten years would have gone to the following books:

1926: A. H. Cole, "The American Wool Manufacture."

1927: V. L. Parrington, "Main Currents of American Thought."

1928: F. A. Shannon, "The Organization and Administration of the Union Army."

1929: U. B. Phillips, "Life and Labor in the Old South."

1930: R. B. Morris, "Studies in the History of American Law."

1931: W. P. Webb, "The Great Plains."

1932: F. J. Turner, "The Significance of Sections in American History."

1933: A. M. Schlesinger, "The Rise of the City, 1878-1898."

1934: C. M. Andrews, "The Colonial Period in American History."

1935: A. C. McLaughlin, "The Constitutional History of the United States."

This seems to me a more consistently intelligent selection than the list of actual prizewinners. It avoids the three flagrant mistakes of the other list and repairs the two most obvious omissions. It is also less academic: it contains no monographs, admits not only intellectual history but economic, social, and legal history as well, and, with one exception, selects books of general interest and importance. Anyone who cared to modify it to suit his own ideas must nevertheless acknowledge that it is excellent. I, for instance, would refuse the 1935 award to what is hardly more than a textbook in favor of Walter Millis's "Road to War," but I admit that it is desirable to recognize Professor McLaughlin's other achievements. I also disagree with both lists about Parrington's book. It seems to me too speculative and too doctrinaire to be given a prize in history; both the Beards' "Rise of American Civilization" and Nevins's "Emergence of Modern America" are more entitled to the award.

My fourteen historians are among the leaders of their profession and their opinion is as authoritative as can be obtained. If the Pulitzer awards are to be anything but arbitrary, the rejection of six out of ten of them by fourteen such historians indicates that something is wrong. I do not imply that it matters much who gets a Pulitzer Prize in history, that more than two of the ten awards are absurd, or that it would be scandalous if they were all absurd. But if public endowments are to be administered at all, it is best to have them administered well. Absolute adherence to the terms of the bequest is impossible, and any award must be a compromise and in part unfair. But they should be less open to question than they have recently been.

Columbia University, whose trustees make the awards, refuses to make public the names of those who serve on the committee for history. They are easily ascertained but I shall respect the wishes of Columbia and only say that the committee itself seems to me unsatisfactory. In recent years two men have served on it who, we may be certain, have not kept in touch with the writing of American history, who are not even fundamentally interested in it. One of them would have

(*Continued on page* 16)

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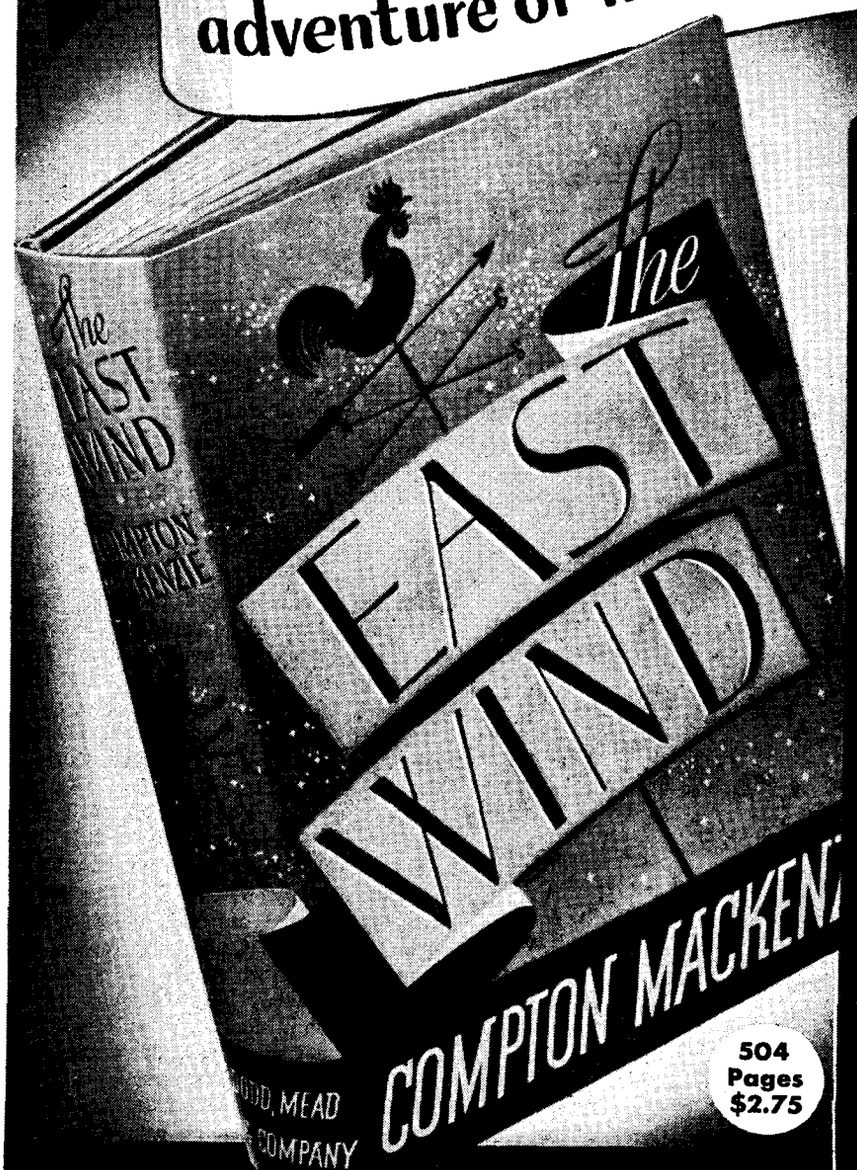

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The Pulitzer Prize in History

(*Continued from page* 14)

been an excellent choice for the committee on biography but his opinions on historiography are not authoritative. Neither of these men could have appraised the books before him on the basis of his own knowledge; doubtless both sought advice, but how were they able to appraise the advice? And not only is their knowledge inadequate: it is unlikely that, in any given year, they had read all of the most publicized contenders for the prize, let alone obscure books which might have been worth more. (Mr. Webb's book was eased quietly into the world by a textbook publisher in a year when General Pershing's was in the headlines of every newspaper.)

At the present time two members of the committee, though distinguished historians, are not trained in nor primarily interested in American history. They are obviously better qualified than the two mentioned above, but they cannot be expected to keep abreast of American history and they do not know from experience what its problems and values are. A committee composed of practising American historians would do a better job. Their professional routine requires them to be familiar with all important work done in the field covered by the award, and only they have the necessary background and skill to appraise the books actually considered for the prize. Their decision would be less open to objection than, on the average, the Pulitzer selections of the last ten years have been.

In addition, the committee might stipulate that, as in 1919, no award will be made in years when no really important book has appeared. If the terms of the bequest permit, a prize so withheld might be awarded in a succeeding year when two books were thought to be outstanding. At least a negative formulation of standards might also be made; the committee might announce what kinds or classes of books it had not considered, and why. Finally, the method of selection itself should be changed. At present the committee does not select the prizewinner, does not in fact recommend one book. It makes a list of recommendations from which some one, nominally the trustees, makes a choice. Just what value this process has, just why the trustees ask advice when unwilling to take it, just why a committee of advisers should serve at all if it is allowed and even forced to avoid the ultimate responsibility, is far from clear. The committee should agree on one book—not on four or a dozen. Then, if its recommendation should be rejected by the trustees, the committee should announce its choice to the public—which after all is asked to respect the award as authoritative.

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Earnest Biographer

THE EARNEST ATHEIST. By Malcolm Muggeridge. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1937. $2.75.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

MR. MUGGERIDGE'S hymn of hate against the author of "The Way of All Flesh" adds very little to our knowledge of Samuel Butler, for it simply expands what the late Stuart Sherman wrote in an essay some years ago. The Introduction, which recently appeared in these pages, is much the best thing in the book. The author's hunting down of his anti-hero, his incessant and continual badgering of him, becomes intolerable before the work concludes. The poor man can do nothing to please Mr. Muggeridge, who, though he uses Butler's famous novel as evidence, seems rather to resent the fact that the work in question is a fictional classic. This dislike extends even to Rufus Festing Jones, Butler's companion and biographer. "Jones," he says, "spoke his words, and from Jones's mouth they emerged dead; his ideas rattled about in Jones's mind, making a hollow, empty sound; his spirit in its new tabernacle, Jones, turned to stone."

There are a few flashes of sardonic humor in Mr. Muggeridge's book, lonely little lighthouses to illumine the gray waste of his pages, as when he writes that "Jones used occasionally to abandon himself to secret bouts of filial affection, and once tearfully confessed to Butler that do what he would he could not manage to detest an elderly maiden aunt." But Mr. Muggeridge fails to explain why "The Way of All Flesh" remains a fictional classic; he gives Butler no credit for the effortless ease of his prose style (surely there must be some connection between Butler's passion for Handel, and the Addisonian lucidity with which he wrote); and he fails to explain why Butler held the affection of the little group who surrounded him and hung on his every word—Mr. Cathie, the butler, for example, with whom Mr. Muggeridge talked, "obviously had a deep and sincere affection" for his employer. Mr. Muggeridge has so heavily underlined his distaste for Butler's personality as to make it impossible to get into focus the mean-minded person he constructs, and the attachment of those who believed in Butler. The Jones biography is certainly a little ridiculous, and it is easy to damage the man who thought that the Odyssey was written by a woman, but the true critical problem would seem to be, not why Butler failed as a human being, but why he succeeded as a writer of prose. Mr. Muggeridge's hostility leaves this problem in Egyptian darkness.

Howard Mumford Jones is professor of English at Harvard University. His new book of poems is reviewed on page 10.

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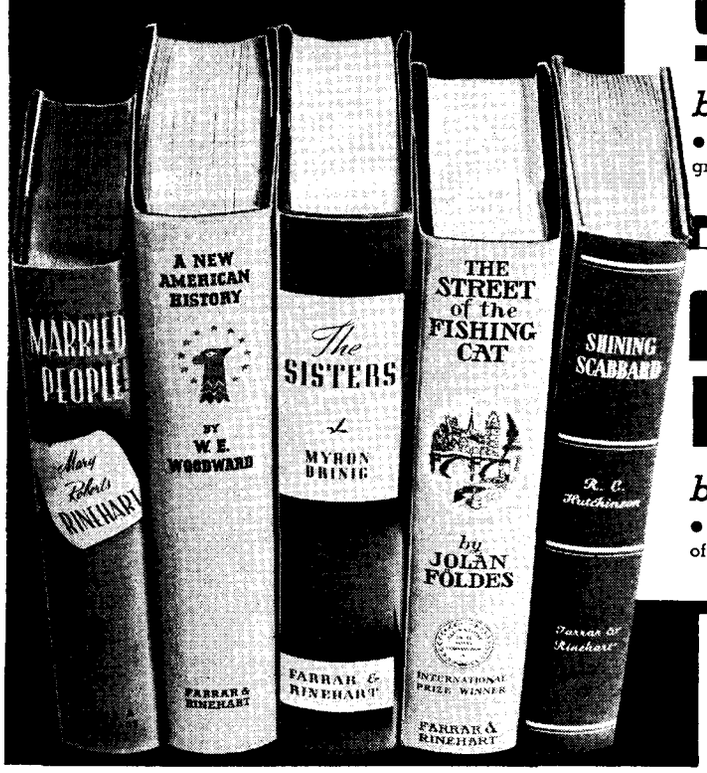

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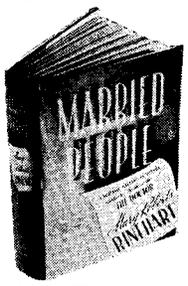

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Wandering Minstrel

DON GYPSY: ADVENTURES WITH A FIDDLE IN SOUTHERN SPAIN AND BARBARY. By Walter Starkie. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by RICHARDSON WRIGHT

PROFESSOR WALTER STARKIE is a *Romani rai* of the purest ray serene, and probably better washed than most of his *Rom* friends. He has a highly developed nose for Gypsies. He can smell the smoke of their camp fires miles off, play most of their songs, and read their patterans in a dozen dialects. Once his classes are over (he's Professor of Romance Languages in the University of Dublin) he grabs up his fiddle and staff and is off to be a Gypsy himself.

So far "Raggle-Taggle" has recounted his adventures in Hungary. Then came the first of his plunges into the Iberian Gitanas, told in "Spanish Raggle-Taggle." It is a more sober *Romani rai* that goes this time to Spain, and yet his account loses nothing of either raggle or taggle.

Barbary is his jumping-off place. Here he drops his respectability and tries picking up odd pennies playing on street corners. This is his technique. It invariably brings him contact with some Gypsy, after which his way becomes colorful and really adventurous. Tangier, Tetuan, and the sacred city of Xauen all contribute to his repertoire and circle of vagrant friends. Crossing the Strait, he starts off through Andalusia. Sometimes he permits himself the questionable luxury of a packed railway coach, more often he goes afoot, taking chances on finding a lift. Adventure comes to him without his seeking it—that is the luck of a wandering minstrel. What he is seeking, though, is Gypsies and Gypsy music.

Dropped in between bawdy and picaresque affairs are rich plums of learning. Raggle-taggle or not, Starkie is a learned fellow. A Moorish *Zambra* is worth the whole trip to Barbary. If he needs must perform in a bordello, he is quite satisfied with it so long as he can get some crumb of Gypsy lore or a snatch of obscure Gypsy melody. Though he can be both poetic and healthily Rabelaisian in turns, if torrid romances threaten him he remembers his tutorial dignity and manages to walk away casually. There are times when his plums of learning come thick and fast: page after page is broken by delightful translations of Gypsy songs and bars of their music.

There are times, too, when, with skillful economy of words, he draws the misery of Spain or the tranquillity of a visit to his musical hero Falla or the nostalgic memories of Fernando de Triana, the dean of Deep Song. Now Deep Song is the quarry that many a *rai* visiting Spain has hunted down. Our own Irving Brown of Columbia was one of the most successful collectors of these old songs that modern Gypsies are forgetting.

Finally, as a passionate pilgrim, Starkie went to La Mancha to pay his respects to the shades of Sancho Panza and the lady Dulcinea. For three weeks he wandered on foot from one Manchegan village to another, through a country of thyme and rosemary, of muleteers who sang *coplas* at the top of their voices along the dusty roads, and at night time he found placid bivouac beneath cork trees . . . . And down those roads today?

A splendid glossary and bibliography end the book. A book that followers of Gypsy patterans will revel in, a book to make those who never heard the *Romani chib* rise up and go awandering.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
DEAD MEN ARE DANGEROUS *Garnett Weston* (Stokes: $2.)	Carnival of killing on California orange hacienda forced to unexpected solution by "Highway," hobo detective extraordinary.	Well-knit fabric of family hatred, diabolical murder devices, miscellaneous villainy, and high-handed but effective sleuthing.	Excellent
THE THING IN THE BROOK *Peter Storme* (Simon & Schuster: $2.)	Two thrice-slain corpses and a suicide finally elucidated by "intuitions" of verdant amateur criminologist Henry Hale.	Carefree and tangle-footed sleuthing, bright dialogue, grisly crimes, and an Aesopian—if slightly unfair—criminal *modus operandi.*	Diverting
THE UNFINISHED CLUE *Georgette Heyer* (Crime Club: $2.)	Domineering and generally disliked British knight slain at stock-model houseparty where almost all are suspect. Enter Scotland Yard.	Barring the delightful Lola de Silva, self-confessed incomparable dancer, this is neither as cleverly plotted nor amusing as earlier Heyers.	Average
THE OBSTINATE CAPTAIN SAMSON *Gavin Douglas* (Putnam: $2.)	All the soldiery of Savonia couldn't restrain choleric Capt. Samson from sailing with cargo of grain—and more sinister material.	Has its moments—the finish is especially hilarious—but it takes more than Samson's repetitious raging to make really good yarn.	Fair

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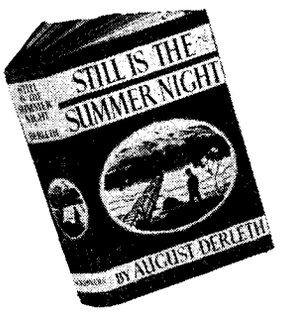

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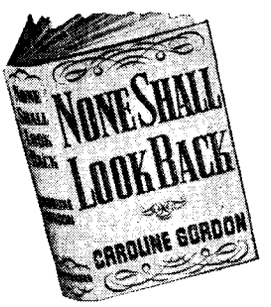

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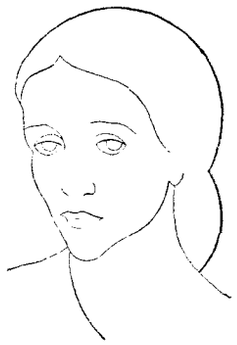

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ANNA BECKER

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The PHŒNIX NEST

CONTEMPORARY POETRY: BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

FRANCES FROST'S new book, "Road to America" (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.), shows, in the first of its three sections, an increase in range. This, the title-poem, consists of a series of vignettes, beginning with the settling of the New World and high-lighting American history down to the present. She too has faced a problem of, in this case, *extreme* condensation. She has many strong and beautiful lines. It is easy to show what "The Mirage of the Seven Cities, 1539" owes to MacLeish's "Conquistador"—but when we come to New England in 1936, where Miss Frost is entirely at home, she writes on her own, and uncommonly well; as, indeed, she does in the subsequent "Manhattan." This, of New England, I cannot resist quoting.

The old men listened to crumbling hills, to crickets:
(there would be time to sleep; the world was changed;
a radio jabbered now in the sitting-room
where once the black pot-bellied stove took chunks
cut and hauled from the northwest slope; the lights
glared on the musty stairs; lamps once were softer,
a child's hair mellowed in the glow of wicks).

The final division, "The Challenge, 1937," is good poetry, though the "Epilogue" I found cryptic. Genuine in its feeling and adept in its verse, for the most part, as is this poem, it seems to me to lack clear purpose. But the pictures of various parts of early America are, perhaps, sufficient in themselves.

I find the sonnet section that follows of good workmanship, but bearing—only very occasionally—a trace of the accent of Elinor Wylie. The last section, however, "Snow-Drinker," opens with a fine meditative and questioning poem, "This is a Quiet Country." "The Plum Tree" is delightful and original. "Half-Moon Night" perfectly describes its moment. "Poem Against War" is beautiful and individual, and if "Enemy" recalls Emily Dickinson too strongly, "To an Analyst" is, on the other hand, a modern love lyric with a striking and most fortunate comparison. Miss Frost's is a sensitive and delicate gift. She has, considering the amount she has written, maintained a high artistic standard.

J. Redwood Anderson is an English poet, a friend of Lascelles Abercrombie, and I have found some of his narrative work in the past both fluent and of much interest. I have before me now two books of his, both published by the Oxford University Press ("The Tower to Heaven," $2, and "English Fantasies," $2.25). The former is really the acting version of "Babel," a poetic drama. It has been produced, I believe, in London by Mr. Ashley Dukes. It is a blank-verse poem concerning Nimrod's building of a tower to challenge God, after a flood has terrified Babylon. Other characters are Nimrod's two concubines, one of whom deserts him and one of whom cleaves to him almost to the last, a high priest, an astrologer, the captain of the host, and the architect of the tower. "In his tragedy," says Lascelles Abercrombie, "the past lives again; but comes to life in the questioning of today," and that is as good a general description as any, save that such a poem, in the reading, must stand or fall by the vitality of its verse, and, frankly, I do not find the "spinal chill" present. The soliloquies seem very long for acting, but it is entirely possible that with judicious cutting this symbolic and philosophic drama might have its effective moments on the stage. The "Fantasies" seemed to me for the most part very boring, as uninspired as Wordsworth in his off days. The book is part of a sequence "in which philosophic experience is transmuted, as completely as may be, into poetry." Only, poetry is a "fiery particle," and to me the transmutation of a philosophy seeming essentially stale never takes place.

I must group five books here as very minor but worth a word. Ellen Burns Sherman's "Poems" bear the stamp of The Mitre Press in London. She writes, among other verse, "To a Sequoia" and "The Skiff of Dreams," and the verse is what you would expect. Sister M. Madeleva has a modest and charming little book of Christmas Verse, "The Happy Christmas Wind" (St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N. J.); Katherine Brégy's "Ladders and Bridges" (David McKay: Philadelphia) is by an Irish Catholic poet whose name has long been familiar to me; Alan Creighton's "Earth Call" comes from a Canadian through the Canadian Macmillans. Mr. Creighton sometimes uses an original word, but usually the wrong one. He is amiable in spirit, and he likes the out-of-doors. And I vastly regret to say that John Masefield's "Lines on the Tercentenary of Harvard University" so totally lacks any spark of inspiration and is so flat and droning in its phrase that I marvel it was ever put between covers by Macmillan. No one should make occasional poets out of real poets, and Masefield knew what the daemon of poetry was, in his day. "Time stays. We go."

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 154)

HARTLEY COLERIDGE—
"YOUNG LOVE."

The nimble fancy of all-beauteous Greece
Fabled young Love an everlasting boy,
That held of nature an eternal lease
Of childhood, beauty, innocence and joy. . . .
O, happy error! Musical conceit
Of old idolatry and youthful time!

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Art *plus* History *plus* Detective Work . . .

TAKE for example, the page shown above from the March issue of ANTIQUES. How was it that America's first great portrait painter, John Singleton Copley, managed, among the womenfolk of Puritan New England, to find clients whose gowns and jewels befitted the court beauties of the Old World? That high authority, John Hill Morgan, explains the mystery. Save only for the face, the Copley portrait reproduced at the left is an extraordinarily accurate copy of an engraving after Sir Joshua Reynolds' likeness of an English lady. Why Copley resorted to such "ghost" costumes is more interesting than the borrowing itself!

In every appropriate direction The Magazine ANTIQUES is always eager to find new discoveries, new ways to impart the message of art forms that have stood the test of time, and will still endure when current fads and fancies have long been forgotten. That endeavor is what makes ANTIQUES one of the few among today's magazines possessing an individual flavor—a distinctive personality. Likewise it reflects the wide learning and the humane philosophy of its editor, Homer Eaton Keyes, who is internationally recognized as a sound student and critic in many fields, and an outstanding authority in the domains of American furniture styles and of the porcelain known as Chinese Lowestoft.

ANTIQUES is read by almost every type of person: not only professional antiquaries, but designers, manufacturers, architects, craftsmen, owners of the finest American homes, and young matrons who wish to decorate their domiciles correctly and tastefully.

Reading ANTIQUES month by month will bring you immediate enjoyment and, besides, an intensified perception of the good things of life—not merely values but the backgrounds of association, and the subtleties in style that give value to good old pieces. Your interest may be the collecting of furniture, silver, ceramic wares, or glass. It may be confined primarily to keeping culturally oriented. We advise you to take advantage of the special offer below, NOW.

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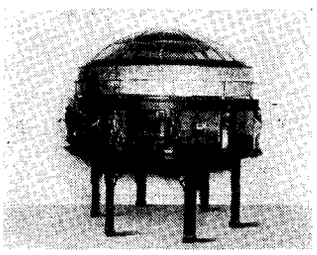
If you are a subscriber you are entitled to advice, free

The monthly column, *Riddles and Replies*, is a notable feature of the Magazine, both to read and from the practical aspect of getting authoritative information about antiques you may own or be considering purchasing. It is packed with extraordinarily varied information in response to queries from all parts of the United States.

IN THE MARCH ISSUE



Harvard Has an ORRERY

It happens to be detective fact instead of detective fiction, but it is an absorbing story with essential elements of suspense and surprise. Here are confinement in a cellar, search and rescue, the ultimate disclosure of a hitherto unrecognized hero. The dénouement will be an eye-opener not only to Harvard alumni but to officers of the University.

Sizing Up an Old House

Anyone can sense the attractiveness of an ancient house properly restored and finished. It is quite another matter to recognize the points of excellence in a dwelling empty, unkempt, and worn with time and misuse. ANTIQUES for March pictures such a place, just as it was found, and tells why it was worth acquiring.

Also in the MARCH ISSUE:

John Hancock's furniture
Unexpected sources of American silver
Not all old rugs are hooked: some unusual examples in other techniques
Coronation souvenirs premature and warmed over: Edward VIII vs. William IV
Advertising pages that no one should miss

The March issue of ANTIQUES is now on leading newsstands. The price is 50c a copy. Or—send $2 now for a 7 months' trial subscription—use coupon at right. Special offer terminates April 1.

The Magazine

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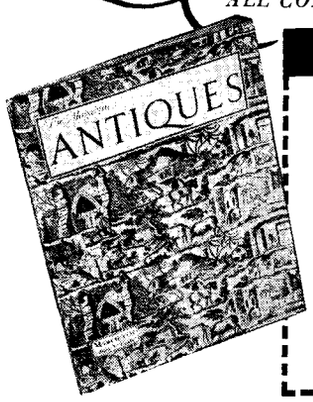

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HORTENSIUS, FRIEND OF NERO

Edith Pargeter

A moving and beautiful story of pagan Rome, told in diary form by Marcus Hortensius Caesar, intimate of the Emperor Nero. He tells of his love for three women, one of whom is a Christian whom he cannot save from martyrdom.

An unsolicited letter from a reader has this to say: "Fortunately I was able to read it without a single interruption, without a soul speaking to me, and I hadn't a conscious stirring of any kind outside the book as long as it lasted. I am wholly superlative about it. It is 'most' to me in every way: most polished, most cultivated, most classic, most Christian, most kind and gentle and serene. And most tragic." *Illustrated* $2.50

Uncharted

Webb Waldron

An enchanting tale of an island and a ship, recommended by Lewis Gannett in the *N. Y. Herald Tribune* to those who liked *"Lost Horizon."*

"A swift-moving novel of events on a tropical island... the action never lags, the dialogue is snappy, and the ending, in which man and nature play important roles, is startling and unexpected."—Harry Hansen, in *Harper's* $2.50

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THE GREYSTONE PRESS
NEW YORK

The New Books

Biography

ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE. By Melrich V. Rosenberg. Houghton Mifflin. 1937. $3.50.

The long life of Eleanor of Aquitaine made a deep impression on the twelfth century. She was married first to a king of France, who divorced her, and then to a king of England to whom she brought her dower of Aquitaine, that great southern duchy whose possession by the Plantagenets committed them to a career of aggression on the continent. She listened to Saint Bernard's sermons, Bertrand de Ventadour's love songs, and the rhymed Arthurian tales of Wace. She went on a crusade with her French husband, and scandalized equally the Frankish and the Saracen chroniclers. Her lovers were legion, but not so many as gossip bestowed upon her. She was more fatal to her second husband than to her first; the rebellion she stirred among his sons stripped the greatest Plantagenet of power, so that Henry II died, moaning, "Shame on a conquered king." She survived the most varied fortunes, and at eighty was still a match for the shrewdest of the younger generation, a vital political force in two kingdoms.

Nevertheless, active as her life was, and numerous as the legends about her are, our clues to the real Eleanor are faint. To recreate anything of her character and background now requires subtle historical insight and varied and discriminating erudition. On both counts this biography is disappointing. Neither Eleanor nor any of her colorful contemporaries really comes alive; her time is painted dully and faintly. The difficulty is less in inaccurate scholarship, though the scholarship leaves much to be desired, than in a pedestrian style and a grave lack of imaginative sympathy.

G. M.

THIS IS MY AFFAIR. By Lola Kinel. Little, Brown. 1937. $3.

The first sentence in Lola Kinel's introduction to her autobiography is "I did not want to write this book." We envy her that sentence. Because we do not much want to review it. We do not think that it is a very good book and we know that saying so will not please Miss Kinel, who expresses anger in the freest terms with people who do not understand and appreciate her. It might have been a good book, of course. Miss Kinel found herself thrown on her own resources at the age of eighteen in revolutionary Russia, and from then until now when she resides in Hollywood she lived in many countries, had many jobs, met a few people—notably Isadora Duncan and the poet Essenine—whose personalities are of public interest. Unfortunately it takes more than extreme activity, even extreme emotional activity, to make a good autobiography. The writer must somehow convey to the reader what changes within himself those changes of residence wrought, what deepening of understanding the human contacts evoked, where she thought she was going, running so fast, and if she thinks she is there, or nearer there, right now. It would also be nice if she wrote well. We don't think the Isadora-Essenine myth is added to or lessened by Miss Kinel's report of her secretaryship to Miss Duncan. We also find it hard to believe that the reason she did not do well as a music critic is because she "likes music too much." We are glad she can speak so many languages, and had some good times. We are sorry she had so many bad times. But not awfully. Perhaps that is the real test of an autobiography. When the reader is through reading does he care about the person whose gratuitous confidences he has shared? Just as one reader, and we hope it won't be held against us, we do not care about Miss Kinel. But then, as she herself says, "This Is My Affair."

F. W.

BEAM ENDS. By Errol Flynn. Longmans, Green. 1937. $2.

In this lolloping yarn by a young movie star there is no evidence of the ghost writer's slick hand, the publishers state, but we'll bet our copy that the slick eye of Warner Brothers' publicity department was upon every word. From the moment Flynn left Sydney in his ancient yacht to cruise along the Great Barrier Reef to New Guinea, where the yacht was wrecked and one of his companions drowned, his days were filled with all the piratical pranks imaginable, "roaring drunks," jaunty seductions, continual fights, the theft of goats and the smuggling of opium, fists pounding the poker table, profanity and supposedly heman wit ("Pull! Pull!" I shouted. "My God, you fellows couldn't pull a Chinaman off your sister!"). Studs Lonigan would laugh himself sick; most readers won't have to. It is a pity that the real adventure material of Flynn's past must appear suspect and emasculate through its presentation. But the Flynn fans may like it; they can take it.

H. D.

Fiction

ACTION FOR SLANDER. By Mary Borden. Harpers. 1937. $2.50.

If you want a readable narrative, you can't beat a good courtroom scene. If it's an English courtroom, so much the better. This story brings into court the suit for slander entered by Major Daviot against two men who had accused him of cheating at poker. Most of the novel is a transcript of the trial, and it makes good reading; it has all the atmosphere of K.C.'s and woolsacks; it is full of surprises; and Miss Borden is a careful storyteller who doesn't let you know till the end how the case is coming out. The hard-bitten army men, the English social luminaries, the lawyers and politicians who impinge on the case, and Major Daviot's fair-weather friends among the

(*Continued on page* 27)

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Art of the Night

By GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

THE publishers of Maxwell Anderson's "The Masque of the Kings" make considerable point of the fact that they are issuing the play in its full, original, uncut form. The news is somewhat disturbing. As a general rule, at least in his more recent years, Mr. Anderson is much more dramatically valuable when cut, and cut liberally. For as time goes on he seems more and more to give himself to verbosity, apparently in the belief that an eloquent non-stop talker is *ipso facto* an important and irresistible dramatist. Someone should tell him that even Shaw, the most eloquent non-stop talker in modern drama, has become something less than irresistible to audiences in late years and that his garrulous plays have sadly detracted from, rather than happily added to, his importance.

It isn't that Mr. Anderson doesn't write and talk well. There is at the moment, I daresay, no fellow American playwright who uses as rich and beautiful phrasings (nor so many of them). It is, rather, that he gives one the impression of a man who, going to the bull-fight that is the drama, occupies himself during its thrilling progress with lengthy poetic disquisitions on taurian zoölogy and with delicate comparisons of the glint of Toledo steel to the gleam in the eyes of Torquemada's best girl. I have no complaint against the disquisitions and comparisons as such. Some of them are in themselves sufficiently dulcet. But the obvious enough fact is that they get in the way of and distract people who came to see the fight. So with his plays. Just as they seem to be on the point of grasping dramatically at the attention and interest, Mr. Anderson heaves himself onto the scene with a colossal verbal squirt-gun and sprays the vital action into a theatrical extermination. He may love life, but when he enters a theatre he becomes eccentrically platonic about it. He reveals himself, in this sense, a lover who talks himself out of his beloved's favor.

In the theatre, "The Masque of Kings" has been pruned, and it could well stand further pruning. Attempting to derive a philosophy, so to speak, from the familiar and now somewhat mothy record of Mayerling and the lovers who met their deaths there, Mr. Anderson constitutes himself a dramatic traffic signal that flashes red every time anything starts to move. Dramatic action gets little or no pass-word from him; he halts it constantly with speeches, nay, more often with lectures. Let the Emperor Franz Joseph say to Rudolph, "May I ask that you state briefly what meaning you may wish me to attach to these hot cries from your heart," and Rudolph replies with nineteen lines of rhythmic prose that cover everything from the Hofburg footmen and the rugs they spread on the ground to the bad jokes at which the court laughs and from the body politic to the evils of the monarchical form of government.

As I have noted, much of what Mr. Anderson writes and says is of a high and lovely sound and sometimes, even, of a high and fine nobility of mind. But, as I have also noted, he writes and says so much of it that he drowns in it the struggles of his drama.

It has, I believe, come to be an accepted critical fact that a dramatist may distort historical facts howsoever he wishes by way of dredging up a likely play from them. Mr. Anderson here takes advantage of this foolish and often offensive allowance in full measure. He brings Franz Joseph into the scene when Franz Joseph could not have been there. He introduces the Empress when fact records that she was at the time nowhere near the Hofburg. And he does various other such things to historical discomfort. It may be his acknowledged theatrical, dramatic, and critical privilege, but I do not like it. I remain one of those wayward nitwits who want a historical play to be more or less accurate. At least, any historical play not written by Shakespeare, Shaw, or the Marc Connelly of "Custard's Last Stand."

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Portraits and Vases

CATALOGUE OF BRITISH PAINTINGS IN THE HENRY E. HUNTINGTON LIBRARY AND ART GALLERY. San Marino: 1936.

RED-FIGURED ATHENIAN VASES IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART. By G. M. A. Richter. New Haven: 1936. $40.

THESE two sumptuous volumes—one printed in Chicago for a California museum, and one in New Haven for a New York museum—may be used to adorn a tale, though hardly, I think, to point a moral. The reason lies in the type and arrangement, which show in both books a due respect for the typographic decencies. In view of the agonized type-setting of many catalogues from the private galleries, and of printing for "art" purposes, the restraint of these volumes is the more noticeable.

There is no especial appropriateness in either the *Centaur* type of Mr. Bruce Rogers, used in the British Paintings volume, nor in the *Bembo* face used in the Vase book: but inasmuch as they are both excellent as type, and sophisticated and suave in design, as well as lacking in eccentricities of either modernism or archaism, they do fit the occasion. Furthermore, the type is arranged in sober regard to the reader's proper interest in the text rather than in the compositor's gymnastic ability. In short, here are two major books done in sober earnest but without stodginess.

The fifty plates of the Paintings volume are reproduced by the offset process, while the one hundred and seventy-three plates of Vases are by the gelatine process known as collotype. The subjects, of course, are very different, which makes comparison difficult; but in any case the two processes (if, as here, skilfully handled) are so satisfactory as to make a choice impossible. Either process is so far above the old-fashioned half-tone (save where fidelity to the detail of the originals is sacrificed to the extreme brilliancy) as to be noticeable. And the relief from coated paper is a definite gain.

The catalogue of paintings is, of course, restricted to those in the Huntington Gallery, as the Vases represented are those of the Metropolitan's collection. Miss Richter's book is the more definitive, dealing as it does not merely with the examples shown, but with the technique of such work. In addition, for the Vase book Mr. Lindsley F. Hall has made some eighty-three fine line drawings. The catalogue of paintings has an introduction by Sir Charles Holmes.

The two volumes of the Vase book are bound in cloth with an all-over design from a vase motif. The binding of the Huntington volume is half cloth, with paper label. They represent, all told, a sane and competent handling of such problems, attractive to look at, neither stolid nor fantastic, but what two great museums regard as good printing.

ORIENTAL LOWESTOFT. By J. A. Lloyd Hyde. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1936.

Another sumptuous catalogue of a specialized subject in collecting is Mr. Hyde's book on Lowestoft. The book lays especial emphasis on the trade with China, and on the porcelain decorated for the American market. Fifty large pages, set in ample style in a relatively big type face, are devoted to the history of the China trade and the Lowestoft which carried American motifs—coats of arms of the nation and the states, marine views, etc. A frontispiece in full color shows a large pistol-handled urn decorated with the arms of the United States; while thirty collotype plates show 114 separate objects. There is an index and a good stout binding to complete a workmanlike volume. Though on the grand side, it is not at all elaborate or overdone.

"Nothing So Monstrous," an episode in "Pastures of Heaven," by John Steinbeck, has been done by the Pynson Printers for the *Colophon*. I don't much care for the story, but the pictures by Donald McKay are in a good tradition.

"Later Bookplates and Marks of Rockwell Kent" is announced for April, by Pynson Printers.

Erratum

By a regrettable error the name of the reviewer of Howard C. Rice's "Rudyard Kipling in New England" was misspelt when the notice of the book appeared in the issue of February 27. Like Kipling's brother-in-law, to whom he was related, Mr. Elliot Balestier spells his name with an *e* in the second syllable and not with an *a* as it was printed in *The Saturday Review*.

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Trade Winds

By P. E. G. QUERCUS

OLD QUERCUS, on a Trade Survey in Cleveland, found much activity stirring. His only disappointment was not to be able to buy the SATURDAY REVIEW in the handsome Fred Harvey bookstore in the great Union Terminal. ☞He still believes that the Fred Harvey shops should carry the S.R.L., which is the ideal reading for a journey. ☞Mr. Frank Frazier (of J. B. Lippincott) who was also on a scouting trip, expressed himself as enchanted by the Sixth City's charm and hospitality. ☞A meeting of the historic Blotto Club, organized years ago by members of Halle Brothers' bookselling staff (under the chairmanship of Miss Veronica Hutchinson) was held at the Statler Hotel. This unusual club, unique in the Trade, exists to gruntle visiting authors and publishers. ☞At Burrows Brothers Charley Jackson and Gordon Bingham reported business very brisk. ☞Peter Keisogloff, who used to run Burrows' department of Old Books, has opened his own shop in the Old Arcade, that picturesque vast antre between Superior and Euclid Avenues, which looks like the Crystal Palace. We suggested as a motto for Mr. Keisogloff's shop "Et ego in Arcadia vixi." ☞Burrows Old Book Department is now run by Porter S. Welch, who is particularly excited about a remarkable set of extra-illustrated Dickens (the Chapman and Hall edition) which they recently purchased. He was excited to discover in Pickwick an allusion to Swing Music—when Mr. P. says "The praise of mankind was his swing."

☞Ted Robinson, Cleveland's admired columnist (in the *Plain Dealer*) was found reading *Men of Mathematics* with delighted attention. ☞At Higbee's, Mrs. Anne Udin, the new manager of their handsome Book Department, is busy making over the panelled reception room into a reading and display space for children. ☞At Korner and Wood's Old Q. found the most ingeniously intricate jigsaw puzzles he has ever seen. They are designed by John Paul Jones (remembered as famous runner at Cornell some years ago) of Chagrin Falls, near Cleveland. The Duke of Windsor, when King, several times ordered some of these puzles, including one which was a map of London in 1500 pieces. ☞Harry Korner told Old Q. that our mention here of his melodious camel-bells (things of lovely and ingratiating tone) sold several sets. ☞A lawyer friend of ours in Cleveland is writing a book on *The Detection and Appraisal of Poetry* which seems an alluring title. ☞We found Richard Laukhuff in his shop reading the new Trotzky and also a German translation of Horace, lately published in Vienna, which renders the poems in their original meters. The translator is Rudolf Alexander Schröder. ☞The Taylor store, where Miss Marguerite Feder is in charge of the book department, has been entirely done over in modernistic decor, since we were last in Cleveland. ☞This is too brief a note on several days in one of our favorite cities, but Old Q. has just arrived in Chicago and is avid for a bath.

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RADCLIFFE domina appalled by the impertinence of George Frisbee so expressing himself concerning "Kitty." Is saddened that Mr. F. has been cheated of those 60 fabulous "spots"; most likely he grows in ease like the fat weed, etc., in surveying the Shakes-scene.

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The New Books

(*Continued from page 22*)

ridin'-and-shootin' set, are all in character. Altogether it's excellent of its kind, and compares very favorably, for instance, with the successful play "Libel," of a couple of seasons ago.

It is true that the actual cheating of which Daviot is accused involves a particular play which no expert poker player would dream of making; an editor should have caught this, and suggested an alteration. But this is a detail. A more serious criticism: every so often Miss Borden gets the idea that she is writing a social study of English high life, and she slows up the action for irrelevant "characterizations," implications or comments on morals and manners, and other interruptions. "Action for Slander" is a story; and there is no reason, outside of literary snobbishness, why it should pretend to be anything else.

G. S.

A WOMAN OF WASHINGTON. By Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr. Dutton. 1937. $2.

A freshman Senator—an appointive one at that—is about to convulse the nation and Wall Street with his maiden speech in favor of a peculiarly hairy-chested Public Utilities bill. A green-eyed Washington siren convinces him that a cell of the wickeder Wall Street manipulators are utilizing the convulsion to make millions off a bear market. To foil them he filibusters against his own measure. Midway in the performance the dastardly deception is betrayed to him, and the old progressive trots happily back to his oats of Bryanesque reform oratory.

Mr. Vanderbilt describes the Washington social and political scene with all the "oohs" and "ahs" and inaccuracies of a literarily inclined visiting typist from Sedalia. Even if you can believe his plot is plausible, you won't be quite able to believe, for instance, that any Vice-President has ever granted the floor in the Senate with the formula, "The chair recognizes Senator William W. Harrow."

Perhaps the kindest thing that can be said for the opus is that it sets a new high in tripe for Washington novels. That packs considerable distinction.

D. A.

Letters Win, 592 to 44, in Double-Crostic Ballot

Letters will be kept in the diagram squares of the Double-Crostics. The headline tells the story: fans are in favor of letters by more than thirteen to one. Nearly all voters stressed the fact that the letters save eyesight. The opponents maintain that letters make the puzzles easier; but according to the supporters, they only facilitate the mechanics of solving, not the actual brainwork.

Mrs. Kingsley and the editors are gratified by the spirited balloting, and hope that the losers will not be inconsolably disappointed by the outcome.

Double-Crostics: No. 155

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

1-D	2-L	3-B	4-R	■	5-T	6-V	7-Q	8-J	9-K	10-B	■	11-L	12-D	13-E	14-K
■	15-S	16-O	■	17-M	18-T	19-C	20-B	21-Q	22-K	■	23-F	24-S	■	25-H	26-P
27-N	■	28-A	29-O	30-P	31-B	■	32-A	33-N	34-I	35-D	■	36-P	37-J	38-G	39-H
40-I	41-O	42-R	43-M	■	44-F	45-C	46-E	47-H	■	48-L	49-O	50-M	51-Q	52-U	53-J
■	54-B	55-G	56-J	57-R	58-Q	59-A	■	60-I	61-Q	62-J	63-T	64-A	65-U	66-V	■
67-R	68-G	69-L	70-N	71-H	72-S	■	73-G	74-L	75-V	76-A	77-M	78-K	79-E	80-T	■
81-H	82-U	83-Q	84-I	85-M	86-A	87-D	88-B	89-K	90-P	■	91-R	92-V	93-B	94-Q	95-I
96-A	■	97-E	98-B	99-R	100-A	101-U	102-M	103-S	104-K	■	105-P	106-H	107-D	■	108-J
109-L	110-M	111-B	112-A	■	113-D	114-F	■	115-H	116-N	117-F	■	118-M	119-Q	120-V	121-T
122-G	123-I	124-B	125-E	■	126-H	127-I	128-L	129-A	130-P	131-E	132-U	■	133-N	134-A	135-K
136-L	137-C	■	138-F	139-D	■	140-N	141-C	142-K	143-P	■	144-E	145-O	146-H	■	147-G
148-H	149-A	150-U	151-Q	■	152-C	■	153-M	154-B	155-S	156-O	157-N	158-J	159-K	■	■

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-two words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's International Dictionary.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 20 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS — WORDS

A. Capriciousness.	129 32 149 100 28 86 64 134 59 76 112 96
B. Degenerated; receded.	3 88 124 111 154 54 98 93 31 10 20
C. Author of "Journal Intime."	152 137 45 141 19
D. Attendants on Poseidon.	87 35 1 12 113 107 139
E. Character in "Richard III."	131 79 46 13 144 97 125
F. Author of biography of Hoover (1928).	138 117 44 23 114
G. Retarded.	147 122 55 68 73 38
H. Fiery river in Hades.	126 115 81 146 39 71 148 47 25 106
I. Deprived of contents.	127 40 34 60 123 84 95
J. Wrestles.	8 37 108 53 56 62 158
K. Danish explorer and author (1879-1933).	142 135 104 22 9 159 89 78 14
L. Work of skillful ability.	2 128 109 69 11 74 136 48
M. Early candle.	77 50 17 102 85 110 153 118 43
N. French poet (1762-1794).	133 140 116 70 33 157 27
O. Greek poet, author of "Works and Days."	145 41 16 29 49 156
P. Hero of tragedy by Ben Jonson.	143 130 36 105 30 26 90
Q. Upsets; capsizes.	21 83 58 61 51 119 7 94 151
R. Settled in one's home (bird lore).	42 4 91 67 99 57
S. Heroine of "I Pagliacci."	24 103 155 72 15
T. Wrongdoings.	18 5 121 80 63
U. Utter chaos (Bib.).	101 82 150 52 65 132
V. English wit (1771-1845)	66 120 6 92 75

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Ellsworth
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Emery
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Ensign
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